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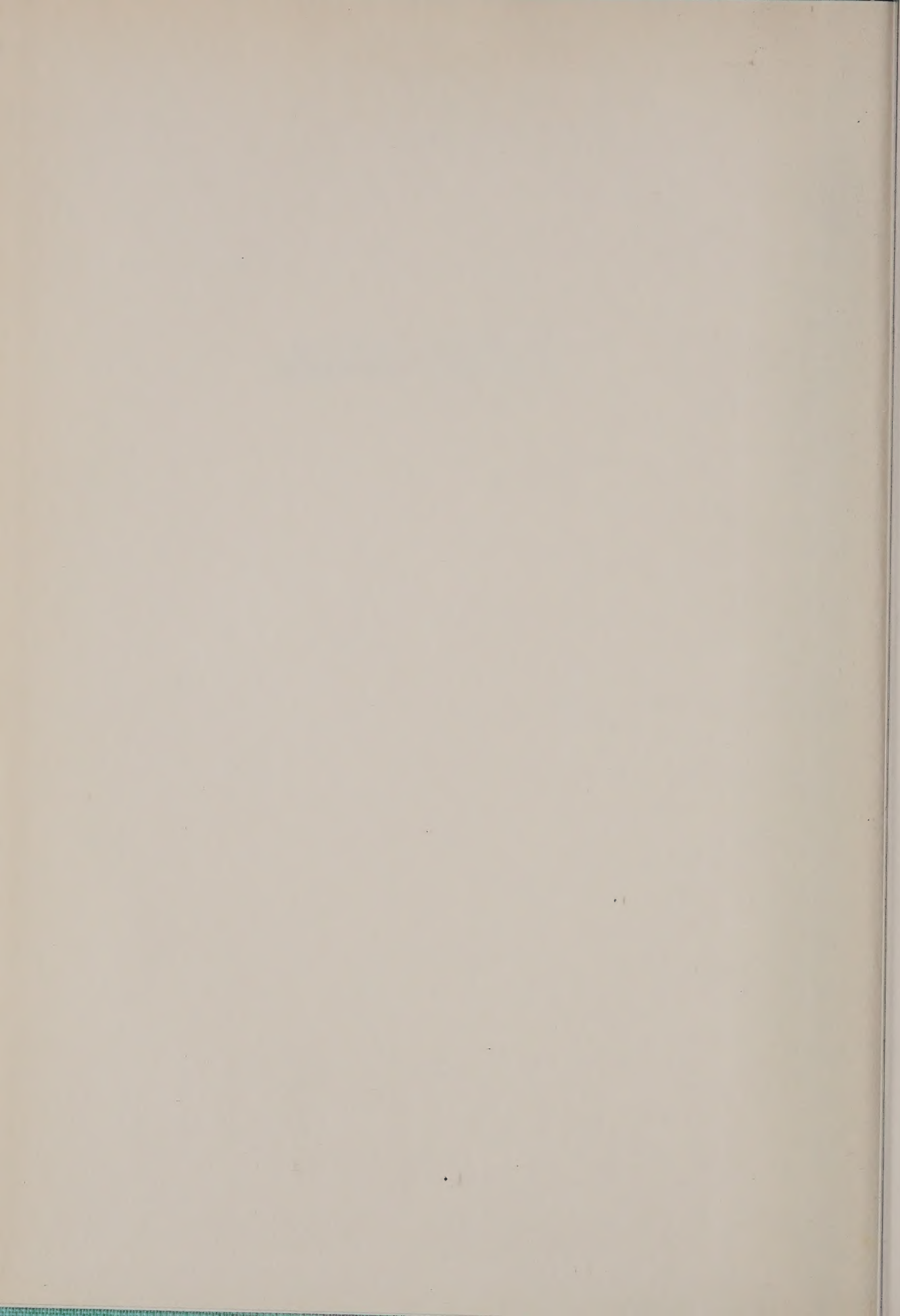
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**HISTORY OF
TENNESSEE**



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HISTORY OF TENNESSEE

BY

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VOLUME I

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Foreword

Few states have as fascinating a history as Tennessee. The Volunteer State has produced three Presidents, all of whom were outstanding figures. Across the pages of history have moved such colorful characters as Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson, Alvin York, and "Boss" Crump. Many other states are indebted to Tennessee for pioneers and statesmen who built them into greatness.

Tennessee is a long, narrow state with such a wide diversity of topographical features that the people in the different sections have had difficulty in communicating with and understanding one another. Included within this diversity, however, is a plethora of natural resources which has made possible, with improved transportation facilities, rapid economic development.

Following occupation by prehistoric Indians, whose mounds have only recently been subjected to careful, scientific investigation, the Tennessee country was claimed and used by the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and, temporarily, the Creek and Shawnee tribes. During much of the colonial period these Indians and their neighbors, and the white traders who lived among them, became pawns of European diplomacy, and the ultimate success of the English in the inter-colonial wars meant that Tennessee would be English in cultural background rather than French. The periodic Indian wars, the step-by-step removal of the Indian title and of the Indian himself from the land, and the conflicting interests of land speculators and pioneering settlers in the development of a land system were interesting aspects of Tennessee's early history.

During most of its pre-statehood existence Tennessee was North Carolina's claim to western land. That colony's lack of interest in the West was one reason why the first permanent Tennessee settlers found it necessary to follow the example of the Pilgrim fathers at Plymouth and govern themselves under a semi-independent Watauga Association or Compact. Following the Revolution North Carolina's belated interest was largely mercenary, and separation of Tennessee from its neglectful parent constituted a serious problem. Separation was achieved after a rebellious interlude of the "Lost State of Franklin" and intrigues with the Spaniards at New Orleans, and the Tennessee country became the "Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio." Admitted to the Union as the sixteenth state in 1796, it was the first state to pass through a period of territorial government as provided for in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

At the time of admission Tennessee was still a frontier state, with primitive agricultural practices and living conditions. Some beginnings had been made in organized religion and education, but they were able to alleviate only partially the outlawry which was prevalent. One of the state's first two Senators was expelled from the United States Senate and politics became so personal that

the two outstanding leaders, John Sevier and Andrew Jackson, became involved in a bitter feud.

Not only at King's Mountain during the Revolution but also during the War of 1812, the independent spirit of Tennessee's people created a tradition symbolized by the nickname, "Volunteer State," which was to be exemplified in the Mexican War and later conflicts. The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans brought Andrew Jackson to national attention, and Tennesseans basked proudly in reflected glory as his presidential aspirations achieved success. When, however, they believed that Jackson himself was becoming too domineering and that some of his policies were not in accord with the economic interests of Tennessee, it was independent-minded Tennesseans who spearheaded a revolt against his leadership.

The movement against Jackson had as a direct result the formation of the Whig party, which carried the state in every presidential election from 1836 to 1852, even including a victory over adopted-son Democratic candidate James K. Polk. In state elections the strength of Whigs and Democrats was evenly matched and consequently this era was one of many exciting political battles. Eventually, in the 1850's, the Democrats emerged as the dominant party, largely because the Whig party, on a national basis, split on the rock of anti-slavery. Most Tennessee Whigs remained firm in their political principles. They provided much of the membership in the Know Nothing party, supported John Bell and the Constitutional Union party in the election of 1860, and led the fight against secession until Lincoln's call for troops ended hopes for reconciliation between North and South.

Tennessee divided along sectional lines during the Civil War, with East Tennessee remaining loyal to the Union and Middle and West Tennessee supporting the Confederacy. The strategic location of the state with its Tennessee and Cumberland river systems providing ready access to the heart of the Confederacy, and with its important rail centers at Nashville and Chattanooga, made it the major battleground of the West. More battles were fought on its soil than in any state except Virginia. Nashville, the state capital, fell early in the war, and former Governor Andrew Johnson, with "Military Governor" as his title, suppressed disloyalty with such vigor that he became Lincoln's running mate in 1864, thus succeeding to the presidency after Lincoln's assassination.

With the close of the war, Tennessee escaped the evils of carpetbag government only to endure the even more rigorous rule of home-grown Unionists led by William G. (Parson) Brownlow. Brownlow's regime was created by disfranchisement of Confederates, maintained by force, and infused with corruption. It collapsed in 1870, leaving the state a heritage of bitterness and a mammoth state debt, the payment of which was to be a major political issue for more than a decade.

Like other Southern states, Tennessee, in the years after the Reconstruction, was governed politically by the ex-Confederate leaders, or "Bourbons." Their rule was challenged by the industrialists, with whom they sometimes allied, and by a rising group of small farmers who flirted briefly with the imported radical doctrines of the Farmers' Alliance and Populism, but in the end remained loyal to the Democratic party and wrested its control from the hands of the Bourbons. By 1896 and Tennessee's Centennial Celebration, held during the summer months of the following year, most of the scars of war had been obliterated. Industrial growth was rising to one day challenge agriculture as the major source of state wealth, and a new leadership was forming to guide Tennessee's growing population as it faced the new problems of the modern, industrial age.

A new century brought new opportunities and new responsibilities to the people of Tennessee. Industrial progress, machine methods of agriculture, and improved highways brought about the development of urban centers in the state. These innovations also brought a better balance between agriculture and industry.

Drastic changes involved social, economic, political, and educational adjustments. The people of Tennessee in the twentieth century, with two interruptions for war, have made considerable progress in adapting themselves to the new age of industry and science. The great atomic power plant at Oak Ridge, the various armed services projects at Memphis, Millington, Tullahoma, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville have contributed to the change in the character of economic life. The people have adjusted to new ways without losing the rugged characteristics of the frontier and agrarian periods. They face the future with confidence and look forward to the development of a greater Tennessee.

We are fully cognizant of the able work of others who have delved into Tennessee history before us. The footnote references clearly indicate our dependence upon their work. Others—librarians, collectors, and archivists—have made our work easier. One or more of the present writers have been aided generously by the staffs of many libraries, including those at the Library of Congress, State Library, University of North Carolina Library, Duke University Library, University of Tennessee Library, Lawson-McGhee Library, Joint University Libraries of Nashville, Fisk University Library, Memphis State University Library, Middle Tennessee State College Library, and numerous city libraries, including those of Knoxville, Nashville, and Memphis. Private manuscript collectors have been most generous in permitting us to examine their material.

Numerous persons have read portions of the manuscript and have made valuable suggestions. Professor William E. Cole, University of Tennessee, and Miss Mary U. Rothrock, Knoxville, read all of Professor Folmsbee's chapters

and many of Corlew's and Mitchell's. Dr. Frank B. Williams, Jr., of Johnson City, has read all of Professor Corlew's material. He improved upon the style and made valuable suggestions and criticisms. Others who have read a portion of these chapters include Professors Norman L. Parks, Roscoe L. Strickland, William T. Windham, and Homer Pittard, of Murfreesboro; Professor J. Milton Henry, of Austin Peay State College, Clarksville; and Professor Ralph W. Haskins, University of Tennessee.

The authors collectively are indebted to Dr. William T. Alderson, Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Historical Commission, for his early assistance in composing the table of contents and in compiling bibliography. The authors are not unmindful of their wives—Ocie Buckner Folmsbee, Mary Scott Corlew, and Ara Reed Mitchell—who read proof, assisted with the research, and otherwise participated in the project.

Professor Corlew wishes to express appreciation to the Southern Fellowship Fund and also to the Blake Leech Memorial Fund for stipends granted to him for research on other projects, but which findings in part have been incorporated into this study.

As indicated elsewhere, Professor Folmsbee wrote Chapters 1-15 and 19; Professor Corlew wrote Chapters 16-32, excepting 19; and Professor Mitchell wrote the remaining chapters. Each author assumes full responsibility for his respective chapters.

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CHAPTER I

The Land of Tennessee

HISTORY IS THE RECORD of the sum total of human experiences. A fundamental factor in determining the nature of man's existence is the land on which he lives, its physical features and economic resources.

There is a close relationship between geography and history. Therefore, in beginning a detailed history of Tennessee it will be well to acquaint the reader with a few elementary facts concerning the location of the state, its boundaries and how they came to be the way they are, its physical features and physiographic divisions, and its natural resources. Tennessee, an inland state, is located in the south central part of the United States. Long, narrow, and rhomboidal in shape, its greatest length from east to west is 432 miles and its greatest width from north to south, 110 miles. It extends from the peaks of the Unaka Mountains on the east to the Mississippi River on the west. It ranks thirty-fourth in size among the fifty states, having a total land and water area of 42,244 square miles.¹

It is bounded on the north by Kentucky and Virginia, on the east by North Carolina, on the south by Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and on the west by Arkansas and Missouri. Only four states are bounded by more states than Tennessee. The eastern and western boundary lines are largely natural in character, one following for most of the distance a mountain crest and the other the course of a river. On the other hand, the northern and southern lines, although they were supposed to follow two parallels of latitude, 36°30' and 35°, the charter bounds of North Carolina,* suffered from highly inaccurate surveying and recurrent interstate controversies.

The northern boundary as a result has a particularly uneven or jagged appearance. Its most eastern section, to a place called Steep Rock Creek on the edge of Johnson County, was surveyed in 1749 by a joint commission representing the two British colonies of Virginia and North Carolina. One of the commissioners was Peter Jefferson, father of the third President of the United States. During the American Revolution the now independent states of Virginia and North Carolina created in 1779 another joint commission to

* Before Tennessee became a federal territory and then a state, it was a part of North Carolina.

continue the survey. Unable to find the marker left at Steep Rock Creek by the Jefferson party, they made their own inaccurate calculations to determine the location of the 36°30' parallel and started from there. After surveying for about forty-five miles, to Carter's Valley, the members of the commission disagreed and divided. Judge Richard Henderson, head of the Transylvania Company of land speculators, insisted that the line should be two miles further north. He and the other North Carolina commissioners moved two miles due north and surveyed a line westward parallel to the line being surveyed by the two Virginians, Dr. Thomas Walker, head of a different land company chartered by Virginia, and Daniel Smith. The Henderson survey was abandoned near Cumberland Gap, but the so-called Walker line was continued as far as the northward-flowing Tennessee River. Actually, when the commission members separated, instead of being two miles too far south they were several miles north of the true 36°30' parallel, and as the Walker line was surveyed westward it continued, after periodic adjustments, to creep farther and farther to the north due to faulty instruments and faulty surveying. When it reached the Tennessee River it was more than twelve miles north of the true parallel.

Even so, after Tennessee entered the Union as a state she insisted that the even more erroneous Henderson survey should be accepted as the correct one; and she finally succeeded in inducing Virginia to accept as a compromise a new line surveyed in 1802 eastward from Cumberland Gap equidistant from the Walker and Henderson lines of 1779-1780. The next year the new line was accepted by legislative action of both states. Years later Virginia attempted to reopen the question and sought to have the true 36°30' parallel established as the boundary, even carrying the case to the United States Supreme Court. The Court decided, however, in 1892 that long usage, legislative acceptance by Virginia, and implied acceptance by Congress had made the 1802 line final.

Kentucky was more successful than Virginia in its negotiations with Tennessee. As mentioned above, the Walker line of 1779-1780 was not surveyed beyond the Tennessee River, but the termination point on the Mississippi River was marked. Kentucky, aware of the line's inaccuracy, refused to accept it as the boundary even between Cumberland Gap and the Tennessee, unless assured that a new and correct line should be surveyed between the Tennessee and the Mississippi. In 1818, when the region west of the Tennessee was about to be opened to settlement as a result of Jackson's Chickasaw Purchase, she made such a survey herself. In 1820 an agreement was negotiated between the two states which accepted that Kentucky survey as the boundary and extended the line northward down the Tennessee to a junction with the Walker line. From that point eastward to the eastern boundaries of the two states the Walker line was allowed to stand in order to avoid disturbing the citizenship status of the many Tennesseans residing



Old Map of Tennessee

(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

north of that inaccurate survey. Thus is explained the interesting jog in the Tennessee-Kentucky line at the Tennessee River. Even a casual glance at a map of Tennessee which shows the true $36^{\circ}30'$ parallel will reveal what a wide strip of land in northern Tennessee would be in Kentucky or Virginia today if the surveying instruments had been more accurate and surveyors more capable in 1779-1780.²

The southern boundary of Tennessee, particularly that portion between this state and Georgia, is still in dispute, but the principle asserted by the Supreme Court in the *Virginia v. Tennessee* case of 1892 would seem to indicate that there is very little chance that the line as surveyed in 1818 and in general use since that time will ever be disturbed. That slightly inaccurate survey of the 35th parallel, although never officially ratified by Georgia, has been accepted by indirection through use in Georgia state maps, the Georgia Code, and other state documents. Thus, Georgia's efforts, as late as the 1940's, to have a more accurate line surveyed have been ineffectual.

Of equal interest is the fact that on the basis of its original charter as a British colony, Georgia might have had the right to claim a northern boundary somewhat north of the 35th parallel, but the founders of the colony and later colonial and state officials failed to take advantage of their opportunities. The eastern boundary of the Georgia grant according to the charter of 1732 was to follow the Savannah River and whichever branch rose farthest to the north. The northern boundary was to start at the source of that branch and run due west to the "South Seas." Three years later the colonies of North and South Carolina, which had been divided in 1729, agreed that the boundary between them west of the first ridge of mountains should be the 35th parallel. Although it was not known at the time, both the eastern and western branches which join to form the Savannah River actually rise considerably north of parallel 35° , the eastern branch a little farther north than the western. Thus there existed the elements out of which might have arisen a serious controversy between the Carolina colonies and Georgia. And if Georgia should have won and made good its original charter bounds, a rather wide strip along the southern border of Tennessee would now be in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi.

Strangely enough, no serious effort seems to have been made to ascertain the 35th parallel or locate the sources of the two branches of the Savannah until after the American Revolution. In 1787 Georgia and South Carolina agreed upon the shorter, western branch of the Savannah as the boundary between the two states, and at the same time Georgia accepted the 35th parallel as its maximum northern boundary. The agreement stated that the western prong of the Savannah (the Tugaloo and its tributary, the Chatooga) should be the boundary to its intersection of the 35th parallel if it did so intersect; but if it rose south of the parallel, Georgia's northern boundary should begin at its source and run due west to the Mississippi—the then western boundary

of the United States and of Georgia's western claim. The belief current at that time that the Chatooga did rise south of 35° is the explanation of why in the same year South Carolina ceded to the United States what turned out to be a non-existent strip of land between the 35th parallel and the Georgia line. This strip was non-existent because the Tugaloo-Chatooga rises north of parallel 35°, thus making that parallel and Georgia's northern boundary one and the same. Nevertheless, this mythical strip of land was formally ceded to Georgia by the United States in 1802 when Georgia gave up its western claim and accepted its present western boundary, the territory to the west eventually becoming the states of Alabama and Mississippi.

In summary, although in theory Georgia and its heirs Alabama and Mississippi might have been entitled on the basis of Georgia's original charter to claim title to a strip of southern Tennessee about as wide as the one Tennessee acquired from Virginia and Kentucky as a result of inaccurate surveying, Georgia's remissness left that possible claim in the realm of mere speculation. Likewise, the more justifiable claim to a very narrow strip south of the true 35th parallel resulting from the inaccurate survey of 1818 was lost due to Georgia's failure to challenge the line before too much time had elapsed, since courts are hesitant to permit any changes in boundaries long established by custom.³

Physiographic and Political Divisions—From a political point of view Tennessee has been divided into three "grand divisions," East, Middle, and West Tennessee. Topographically, there are six major and two minor physiographic regions. The most eastern of these regions is the Unaka Mountains; next is the Great Valley of East Tennessee, followed by the Cumberland Plateau. The fourth physiographic division, the Highland Rim, surrounds the fifth, the Central Basin. West of the Highland Rim is one of the minor regions, the narrow, Western Valley of the Tennessee River. The sixth major division is called the Gulf Coastal Plain of West Tennessee. The western edge of this plain, the low, bottom lands along the Mississippi, constitutes the second minor division, called the Flood Plain of the Mississippi River or the Mississippi Bottoms. The grand division of East Tennessee is made up of the first two physiographic regions and about half of the third, ending in the middle of the Cumberland Plateau. Middle Tennessee extends from there to the northward-flowing Tennessee River, and West Tennessee from the Tennessee River to the Mississippi.

Historically, the division of Tennessee into sections began early in the state's history, and a sectional consciousness was not slow in developing. For several decades after statehood it was not unusual to see letters addressed to persons in Knoxville, East Tennessee. Prior to 1818, when the region west of the Tennessee River was opened to settlement, what is now Middle Tennessee

was called West Tennessee. Following the opening in 1818 of what was at first called the "Western District" and later West Tennessee, the name of the central division was naturally changed to Middle Tennessee. Beginning in 1835, the legislature has designated the counties to be included in each of the "grand divisions." At that time two counties, Hardin and Perry, were bisected by the northward-flowing Tennessee. The legislature arbitrarily assigned Hardin to Middle Tennessee and Perry to West Tennessee. Ten years later, when the portion of Perry County lying west of the river was made into a new county of Decatur, the legislature neglected to re-assign Perry to Middle Tennessee, even though it was now entirely east of the river; and Perry County has remained technically a part of West Tennessee ever since.⁴ The Tennessee constitution as revised in 1870 provides that no more than two of the five judges of the supreme court may reside in any one grand division. Therefore, it can truly be said that the division of the state into three "grand divisions," East, Middle, and West Tennessee, is embedded in the constitution.

Returning to the division of the state into physiographic regions, sometimes called natural divisions, it should be noted that these regions are characterized by a great diversity of physical features since they conform to the geologic structure of the underlying rocks, which present a great variety of topographic forms. The average elevation of the state is approximately 900 feet above sea level. Its surface slopes in general from east to west, with the peaks of the mountains on the eastern border rising in some instances to elevations of more than 6,000 feet in contrast to elevations as low as 300 feet in the Mississippi Bottoms.

The six major physiographic regions of Tennessee are merely sections of larger regions which for the most part extend far beyond the borders of the state. For example, the Unaka range of mountains is the western front of what geographers call the "Blue Ridge province" of the major geographic division called the Appalachian Highlands, or more familiarly the Appalachian Mountains. The Blue Ridge province extends from Pennsylvania into northern Georgia. In the neighborhood of Roanoke, Virginia, this mountainous area divides into two prongs, the western being the Unakas and the eastern the famous Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and North Carolina, and between them lies the Asheville Plateau. The watershed dividing the rivers flowing into the Atlantic from those flowing into the Mississippi follows the crest of the Blue Ridge. The boundary line between North Carolina and Tennessee in general follows the crest of the Unaka range, and only the portions of these mountains lying west of that line are in Tennessee. Through them several eastern branches of the Tennessee River have cut their way, thus dividing the Unakas into sections with local names.

Some of these local names were in use when the Tennessee-North Caro-

lina boundary first came into being as a result of North Carolina's cession to the United States in 1789-1790 of its claims to western land. The boundary as described in this cession law was to follow the crest of the Stone Mountains from the Virginia line to the Watauga River, then the Yellow (now called Unaka, or by some considered an extension of the Iron Mountains) Mountains between the Watauga and the Nolichucky, the Bald Mountains from the Nolichucky to the French Broad and Big Pigeon, the "great Iron or Smoaky [Smoky]" Mountains to the Little Tennessee, and finally the "Main ridge" of the "Unaka or Unicoy [Unicoi]" Mountains to the southern boundary of the state (35° parallel). The northern part of the line was surveyed in 1799 and the remainder in 1821. When the joint commission which made this second survey reached the Hiwassee River, they realized that they had come to the end of the Unicoi or Unaka Mountains, which do not extend under that name all the way to Georgia. Therefore, they surveyed a line due south to the Georgia boundary. They could have argued with equal justification that the intention of the cession law was that the line was to follow a mountain crest all the way to the southern boundary, and should run along the crest of the Frog Mountain, which is in effect a continuation of the Unicoi range, to the Georgia line. It is interesting to note that if they had surveyed such a line the rich copper deposits in the Ducktown-Copperhill region of Polk County would be in North Carolina instead of Tennessee.*

There exists a serious difference of opinion among geographers and geologists and a great disparity in common usage as to the proper general name to be given the whole western front of the Blue Ridge province, along which lies most of the Tennessee-North Carolina boundary. The use of the name Unaka (Cherokee for White Mountains) in the present work is in accord with usage of Professor N. M. Fenneman in his popular textbook, *Physiography of Eastern United States*, which in turn harks back to the nomenclature used by Killebrew and Safford in the 1870's and to Safford's *Geology of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1869). The disadvantage, of course, is the fact that the same name with the same spelling is sometimes used for a section of the mountains along the northeastern boundary of Tennessee, and also, with the alternative spelling Unicoi, for another section in the southwest. Even so, the use of Unaka as the general range name probably has more logic behind it than the use of any other nomenclature. Despite the opposition of geographers, the term Allegheny (or Alleghany)⁵ acquired considerable currency during the nineteenth century and is still heard occasionally today. Such use had no official basis and

* There is a legend that these surveyors were so tired and thirsty when they reached the Hiwassee River, and so much in haste to refresh themselves at a noted tavern not so very far distant, that they chose to complete their survey by going due south through easily-traveled country rather than resume the struggle with difficult terrain on top of a mountain.

conflicts with the well-established application of the name to some mountains in Pennsylvania of which the Cumberland Plateau is a natural extension. The name Appalachian has also been used even though officially it has a much wider connotation. In recent years there has been a tendency on the part of some geographers to use the name Unaka Mountains to describe the upper half of the western front of the Blue Ridge, from the Big Pigeon branch of the French Broad River northward, and to extend the application of the name Great Smokies to include all of the lower half, from the Big Pigeon to the end of the range in Georgia.⁶ It is to be hoped that some time geographers will come to some definite decision and agreement and thus end the present confusion as to nomenclature.

The Unaka Mountains Region—The Tennessee portion of the western front of the Blue Ridge, by whatever name or names it may be called, is in reality a belt of from two to four parallel ranges, from which numerous spurs project westward, usually separated by steep valleys. The area of this region which is in Tennessee varies in width from two to twenty miles and covers a total of about 2,600 square miles. It presents the highest and most rugged surface in the state, especially in the area of the Great Smoky Mountains, where several peaks rise to elevations of more than 6,000 feet. The highest, Clingman's Dome, has an elevation of 6,643 feet. Mt. Guyot and Mt. LeConte are nearly as high. The region drains from the southeast to the northwest through the mountains to the Great Valley of East Tennessee. The branches of the Tennessee mentioned above cut their way through and occupy steep-sided valleys which afford many excellent power sites. Despite these gaps, this chain of mountains, together with the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east, have constituted an almost impenetrable barrier between the Tennessee country and the Atlantic Coast. Because of their isolation, the mountaineers residing in the Unaka region have remained until recent times a relatively pure Anglo-Saxon race, still continuing to use many Elizabethan forms in the English language and passing down through their generations variants of Old English ballads.

The rocks in the Unaka area are largely Cambrian* or pre-Cambrian in age, and composed of granite, gneiss, schist, shale, slate, sandstone, conglomerate, and quartzite. During the mountain-building period which closed the Paleozoic era they were folded or faulted by great crustal movements. The erosion of the softer and more soluble rocks resulted in the creation of many beautiful valleys and coves, some of which have agricultural possibilities.

* Geologists have divided the history of the earth into five eras—Archeozoic, Proterozoic, Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic—, and each era into periods, subdivided into epochs. Cambrian is the earliest of the six periods of the Paleozoic era and marks the first abundant life.

More important economically have been the thick forests which have covered much of the area and made lumbering an important occupation. A considerable part of the forest land has been set aside as the Cherokee National Forest.

A notable feature of this mountain region is its scenic grandeur. It is also a "paradise" for the botanist because of its remarkable plethora of botanical specimens. The rhododendrons along the sides of Roan Mountain are especially famous. The creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, together with improved access by modern highways, has made the tourist business with all of its ramifications an important source of revenue, rivaling the receipts of the "moonshiners" and the lumbermen. About half of the 507,000 acres of this park, which is the most-visited one in the nation, lie in Tennessee. The origin of the name "Smoky" Mountains is "the ever-present veil of ethereal haze that hangs over the mountains, softening their rugged outlines and bringing a rare beauty of coloring."⁷

The Great Valley of East Tennessee—This second natural division or physiographic region of Tennessee, like the first, extends beyond the borders of the state, from northern Georgia into southwest Virginia. It is a segment of the Ridge and Valley province of the Appalachian Highlands, which extends from New York to central Alabama. This province includes the Hudson Valley in New York, much of the Susquehanna Valley in Pennsylvania, and the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. In Tennessee, the Great Valley is bounded on the east by the Unaka Mountains and on the west by Walden Ridge, which forms the bold eastern front of the Cumberland Plateau. Ranging in width from thirty-five to fifty-five miles, it covers about 9,200 square miles. It slopes gradually from the northeast to the southwest, with elevations varying from 1,600 feet above sea level near Bristol to 700 feet in the vicinity of Chattanooga. It is made up of long, narrow ridges, usually running from northeast to southwest and ranging in elevation from 1,200 to 2,500 feet, with broad valleys lying in between them. Occasionally the ridges change to a series of rounded hills called knobs. A few of the hills are high enough to be called mountains, such as Clinch Mountain in the northwestern part of the region, which rises about 1,000 feet above the floor of the main valley.

This general contour is the result of the nature of the underlying rocks, which are almost wholly sedimentary and in large measure of a limestone character, but include also some harder shales and sandstones. The lower Paleozoic strata during the passage of great stretches of time have been so folded that in many places the beds are steeply inclined, with their eroded surfaces cropping out in long, narrow belts running in a northeast to southwest direction. The wearing away of the soluble limestone gave rise to the long and fertile valleys, while the more resistant sandstone and chert beds

remained as the ridges. The area is drained to the southwest by the Tennessee River and its tributaries. In the main, the major streams follow the soft and soluble rocks, but at irregular intervals they cut directly through hard and resistant beds to form water gaps.

The Great Valley of East Tennessee, like the Unaka Mountains region but less so, was seriously isolated from the rest of the country until the building of railroads overcame some of the transportation difficulties. Its only outlet by water, the Tennessee River, was obstructed by great navigation hazards and followed a circuitous route to a distant market. The Unakas and the Blue Ridge blocked the way directly to the east; the path around the Unakas to the north still left the Blue Ridge to be conquered; and the way around to the south was not much better. Railroads revitalized the agricultural and industrial potentialities. Since the creation of TVA in 1933, the area has been dotted with artificial lakes or reservoirs behind the several dams constructed to supply electric power and aid in flood control, as well as to improve navigation facilities. In the process much good bottom land was flooded, but even so the Great Valley contains nearly one-fifth of the farm land in the state, most of it devoted to general farming, but with a considerable specialization in tobacco in the northern half. The valley contains significant mineral resources and is also an increasingly important industrial area. It includes two of the four large cities of the state—Knoxville and Chattanooga—; and many of the smaller cities of the region, including the recently-created Oak Ridge, are significant manufacturing centers. Four of the six most important industrial counties of Tennessee—Knox, Hamilton, Anderson, and Sullivan—lie in the Great Valley.

Cumberland Plateau—This third physiographic region extends across the state in a northeasterly direction from Alabama to Kentucky. Under that name it runs from southern Kentucky to the edge of the Gulf Coastal Plain in central Alabama, and constitutes the southern segment of the Appalachian Plateaus province of the Appalachian Highlands. This province extends to the northeast under the name Allegheny Plateaus across West Virginia and Pennsylvania to the Catskill Mountains in New York. It is an erosional remnant of what once was an extensive peneplain. In Tennessee the Cumberland Plateau has an area of about 5,400 square miles and ranges from about fifty to seventy miles in width. It rises about a thousand feet above the Great Valley on the east and approximately the same height above the Highland Rim on the west, varying from 1,800 to 2,000 feet in elevation. There is a much higher, rougher region in the northeast, however, rising to an elevation of about 3,500 feet. This area is called the Cumberland Mountains and is somewhat analogous to the Allegheny Mountains of Pennsylvania. The eastern edge of the Plateau, called Walden Ridge, is a well-defined escarpment.

One writer has described it as a "formidable, gray, rocky, cliff-lined rampart."⁸ It is a familiar sight to motorists driving up the Great Valley from Chattanooga. The western edge is much more irregular because of the entrenched streams which flow from it to the west. Numerous smaller parts of the Plateau, such as Sand Mountain, have been separated from the main plateau by erosion. Also, Lookout Mountain, although geographically a part of the Great Valley, is geologically such a separated piece of the Plateau.

The Plateau includes a unique irregularity called the Sequatchie Valley, which is a great cove which extends almost halfway across the state in a northeast direction from the Tennessee River to Crab Orchard Mountains. It separates the southern part of the Plateau into two great arms. The surface of the valley, which averages about five miles in width, lies about a thousand feet below the surface of the adjoining plateau. This area is very similar in character to the Great Valley and is considered by some geographers to be a part of it. Since it is separated from the Great Valley, however, by such a wide arm of the Cumberland Plateau, it is more customarily described as a part of the latter region.

The rocks on the surface of the Cumberland Plateau are sedimentary in origin. They consist of conglomerates, sandstones, shales, and limestones deposited there during the Carboniferous* or the latter part of the Paleozoic era. Coal is especially important, as it underlies much of the Plateau. The colorful sandstones have been used extensively, especially in recent years, as a building material. The tributaries of the Tennessee River drain the southern and eastern parts of the Plateau, but the central and northwestern parts are drained by the Cumberland. Many of the streams which flow to the west and northwest have cut deep and narrow canyons through the sandstones and shale of the coal deposits to form small coves on the underlying Mississippian limestone. Except for the Sequatchie Valley, the agricultural possibilities of the Plateau are definitely limited. During the early years of statehood the area was familiarly known as "The Wilderness." In recent years, however, the cultivation of Irish potatoes has become quite significant on the Plateau.

Highland Rim—The fourth topographic division forms an encircling rim which almost completely surrounds the fifth region, called the Nashville, or Central, Basin. Both are segments of the Interior Low Plateaus province of the Interior Plains major physiographic division of the United States. This province is a rather small one, extending only from northern Alabama northward to the Ohio River and across it for a short distance into southern Indiana. Its eastern border is the Cumberland Plateau and its western is the high ridges overlooking the Western Valley of the Tennessee River. It encloses

* A term sometimes used to describe the fifth and sixth—Mississippian and Pennsylvanian—periods of the Paleozoic era.

in the Bluegrass region or Lexington Basin of Kentucky an area very similar to the Nashville Basin. The portion of the Highland Rim in Tennessee constitutes the largest of the six natural divisions of the state, with an area of about 10,650 square miles, exclusive of the Elk River Valley, which is considered by some geographers to be a part of the Rim. It slopes gently from an elevation of about 1,000 feet on the east to 800 feet or less near the Tennessee River. It varies in width from about twenty-five miles in the eastern part to about seventy-five in the northwest. The eastern part is a gently rolling plain about 1,000 feet lower than the Cumberland Plateau and 400 feet higher than the Nashville Basin, divided from the Plateau by a steep and uneven escarpment and from the Basin by a rough, hilly region. The part west of the Nashville Basin is similar in formation, but somewhat lower. It is divided from the Coastal Plain by the Western Valley of the Tennessee River.

The rocks in the area are sedimentary in origin and date from the Mississippian period. They are chiefly limestones and shales but include some sandstones. Especially in the eastern part there are many sinkholes caused by the dissolving of the limestone by water in underground channels. Some of the soils on the Rim contain small pieces of rock called chert and have been called the "Barrens" even though they are not entirely lacking in fertility. Other parts are much more productive, particularly in the narrow strips of bottom land in the valleys of the larger streams. Cotton is grown in southern part of the Rim and tobacco in the northern, in the valley of the Cumberland River.

The Central, or Nashville, Basin—As mentioned above, this fifth natural division is almost entirely surrounded by the Highland Rim. In outline it is elliptical and it includes the geographic center of the state. Ranging from fifty to sixty miles in width and extending about 100 miles in length from the northeast to the southwest, it covers an area of about 5,500 square miles. Its surface is rolling or hilly, with an average elevation of 600 feet. Along the borders it is highly irregular due to dissection by streams and occasional projection into it of spurs from the Rim. Even so, the Central Basin has been compared by one writer "to the bottom of an oval dish, of which the Highlands form the broad, flat brim."⁹

The outcropping rocks range in age from early Ordovician to early Mississippian but are largely Ordovician* limestones and shales. The Basin came into existence as a result of erosion on a great anticline that extends from northern Alabama through central Tennessee into Kentucky and Ohio. The resistant, cherty, Fort Payne limestones which once extended over the area were thinned or removed when the Highland Rim peneplain was formed and the more soluble Ordovician limestones underneath were exposed. Erosion

* The next to the earliest period of the Paleozoic era—following the Cambrian.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Mt. LeConte and Gatlinburg, Great Smoky Mountains National Park

developed the Basin and also the Bluegrass region of Kentucky during the next uplift of the area.

The northern part of the Central Basin is drained by the Cumberland River and its tributaries and the southern part by two branches of the Tennessee named the Elk and the Duck. All three of these rivers enter the Basin from the east or northeast and after receiving numerous tributaries flow out to the west or northwest through relatively narrow gorges. The soils of the Basin are highly productive of all crops suited to its latitude and the region has been called the "Garden of Tennessee." Some sections are rich in phosphate, which is an important plant food. Located in the region is the capital of Tennessee, Nashville, the second largest city of the state and an important manufacturing and transportation center. Some of the smaller cities also have important manufacturing industries. The completion in 1957 of Old Hickory Dam near Nashville has made much of the upper Cumberland into an artificial reservoir.

Gulf Coastal Plain of West Tennessee—Between this sixth natural division and the Highland Rim, but generally included for the purpose of classification as a part of the Rim, lies the Western Valley of the Tennessee River. It is a comparatively narrow valley, averaging only ten or twelve miles in width. Spurs from the Highland Rim point in toward it and some of them run all the way down to the margin of the river. Since the building of the Kentucky Dam by TVA, a considerable portion of the river has been officially known as the Kentucky Reservoir.

The Gulf Coastal Plain of West Tennessee is a segment of the major physiographic division called the Coastal Plain, which includes the Atlantic Coast plain as well as the plain along the Gulf of Mexico. From the Gulf it extends up the Mississippi Valley to the mouth of the Ohio River. In Tennessee the Coastal Plain constitutes the second largest natural division of the state, covering an area of about 9,000 square miles. It may be divided into two parts, the Plateau or Slope of West Tennessee and the Flood Plain of the Mississippi River, frequently called the Mississippi Bottoms. The latter is the second of the minor natural divisions of the state. Even the former lacks the rugged features which characterize the remainder of Tennessee, the only hilly part of the region being a belt of land lying just west of the Tennessee River and forming the divide between that river and the Mississippi. The few streams flowing eastward into the Tennessee are short and steep. From elevations of between 500 and 700 feet along this divide the Plateau slopes gently westward to elevations of from 300 to 400 feet along the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi Bottoms. At several points toward the south this plateau extends all the way to the bank of the Mississippi and forms the Chickasaw Bluffs, familiar landmarks to the boatmen on the river. On one of these bluffs is

located the city of Memphis. The streams which flow westward to the Mississippi are rather long but meander slowly through broad, swampy flood plains and are separated by low, level hills.

Between the bluffs at the western edge of the Plateau and the Mississippi River lies the Mississippi Flood Plain or Bottoms. This low strip of land may be covered with water when the Mississippi is at flood stage. It is about ten miles wide in the north but disappears entirely to the south where the meandering Mississippi strikes the Chickasaw Bluffs. The region is almost level and averages about 250 feet in elevation. In most places the land near the river is a little higher than that farther east, thus forcing the streams to flow for miles parallel to the Mississippi before they can find a low place through which to enter it.

In the extreme northwest corner of this division is Reelfoot Lake, the only important natural lake in Tennessee. It was created by the New Madrid earthquakes of 1811-1812, when the earth movements were so great that even the course of the Mississippi was somewhat altered. The first steamboat to navigate the Mississippi happened to be on the river at that time and its captain reported that for a time it seemed that the river was running backwards. Among the changes made was the blocking off of the natural outlet of Reelfoot River, thus creating the lake. It has remained a hunting and fishing "paradise" from the time of Davy Crockett to the present. The lake is about twenty miles long, four or five miles wide at its greatest width, and from fifteen to twenty feet deep.¹⁰

The strata outcropping in the Gulf Coastal Plain area consist of loosely consolidated beds of sand, clay, and shell marl. In the western part, along the Mississippi, there is a deposit of loess which has the property of remaining in almost vertical cliffs. The soils of the Gulf Coastal Plain are extremely fertile, especially in the river bottoms, and this area is the chief cotton-growing region of the state. The area was once densely forested with both hardwood and softwood trees, but except along the Mississippi and in swampy regions most of the trees have been cleared away by fires or wasteful cutting. Memphis is still the leading hardwood manufacturing center in the world but much of the wood is imported from outside West Tennessee. This city, the largest in the state, with a population of about 396,000 in 1950, is an important distribution as well as manufacturing center. Smaller cities such as Jackson, Paris, and Dyersburg also have considerable manufacturing.

River System—With the exception of a small area in the southeastern part near the Georgia line which drains directly to the Gulf of Mexico by way of rivers flowing into Mobile Bay, the entire state of Tennessee is drained by the Mississippi River system. As mentioned above, the rivers of the western part flow directly into the Mississippi; whereas the drainage of the remainder



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Copperhill Basin and Kimsey Mountain

of the state is by way of the Ohio, almost entirely by its two main southern branches, the Tennessee and the Cumberland, and their tributaries. There is a small area, however, in northern Middle Tennessee which drains to the Ohio by way of the Green River.

According to modern nomenclature, the Tennessee is formed by the junction of the Holston River and the French Broad a few miles above Knoxville. The Holston, named for Stephen Holston, an early settler along its upper course, rises in southwest Virginia. Its two major forks converge near the famous "Long Island" at the present Kingsport. Its South Fork receives from the southeast the Watauga coming through the mountains from North Carolina. The French Broad also rises in North Carolina, as does its chief tributary, the Nolichucky. Below the junction of the French Broad and the Holston the main Tennessee receives also from North Carolina a tributary called the Little Tennessee, which enters the mainstream at Lenoir City. Further south the Tennessee has another eastern branch, the Hiwassee, which like its tributary Ocoee rises in northern Georgia. West of the Holston is another

branch of the Tennessee which enters the river at Kingston. Named the Clinch after an early hunter, it rises in southwest Virginia, as does its chief tributary, the Powell. It also receives the Emory from the Cumberland Plateau.

Through the years since white men first came into the country there have been changes in the nomenclature of the upper Tennessee and some of its tributaries, and these changes have caused confusion among historians and have led to numerous historical inaccuracies. French explorers as they came into the country found the Cherokee Indians residing along the present Little Tennessee River, so, after using for a time various Indian names, they began to call that river and the main Tennessee to the Ohio the Cheraquis River. The English followed their example, Anglicizing the word, however, to Cherokee. Learning that one of the leading Cherokee towns was named Tenase or Tennessee, they began to use the name Tennessee for the river on which that town was located, the present Little Tennessee, and subsequently extended its application to the main stream all the way to its mouth.*

For many years the present Little Tennessee was considered to be a part of the main river and carried the same name, Tennessee. The name "Holston" was used to designate not only the present Holston but also a part of the present Tennessee from the junction with the French Broad above Knoxville to the mouth of the present Little Tennessee at Lenoir City. In other words, the present Little Tennessee was a part of the main river and was therefore called Tennessee; the Holston, as described above, was merely a branch of this main river. The trouble was that the amount of water coming down the Holston was much greater than the amount in the present Little Tennessee. Thus the larger stream was being called the branch and the smaller one the main river. Realizing how illogical this was, the users of these rivers gradually came to adopt a different nomenclature. They began to call the Little Tennessee by its present name and limited the name Tennessee to the portion of the river below the junction of the Little Tennessee with the Holston at Lenoir City. The earliest use of this nomenclature which has been found in print was in an act of the Tennessee legislature passed in 1819 (p. 88). Four years later the early state historian, John Haywood, used the name "Little Tennessee" consistently throughout his two histories of Tennessee.

A later change in nomenclature was the extension of the use of the name Tennessee to the river previously called the Holston as far as the mouth of the French Broad. This change was accomplished about 1880 and was due chiefly, it appears, to a desire to make sure that the federal appropriations for improvement of the navigation of the "Tennessee River" would be used for improvements as far up the river as Knoxville. A few years later, in 1889,

* There is no historical basis for the claim advanced by some that Tennessee means "river with the big bend." In Cherokee, as derived from the Creek, it is said to mean "old or beloved town."

the Tennessee legislature attempted to extend federal appropriations all the way to Kingsport by passing a law declaring that the name Tennessee should apply to the river from that point to the Ohio. This legislation, however, was completely ineffective, and there is general agreement among cartographers that the Tennessee is formed by the junction of the Holston and French Broad above Knoxville.¹¹

Just below Lookout Mountain, at Chattanooga, the Tennessee suddenly changes its course, turns abruptly to the northwest, then south and then west, cutting through a deep gorge across Walden Ridge into the previously mentioned Sequatchie Valley, receiving the Sequatchie River as another of its branches. The tortuous course through Walden Ridge, once called the "Narrows," long presented fearsome perils to navigators. Emerging from the Sequatchie Valley, the river resumes its southwest course as far as Guntersville, where it turns northwest across Alabama, creating as it does so—or did create, before the river was tamed—the famous river hazard, the Muscle Shoals. Caused by the intermingling of hard, erosion-resistant rocks with softer ones in the river bed, these rapids, dotted with islands, reefs, and bars, constituted for centuries the most serious barrier to navigation of the Tennessee. Near the head of the Shoals, the river receives another branch, called the Elk River, which comes down from Middle Tennessee. Below Florence, Alabama, the Tennessee, instead of continuing westward to the Mississippi turns northward and flows for nearly two hundred miles across Tennessee and Kentucky to a junction with the Ohio. The reasons why the Tennessee does not find a more natural outlet directly into the Gulf of Mexico or into the Mississippi have been disputed by geologists. Some think that repeated upheavals of the land forced it to take a westward and then a northward course, after it had once found an outlet in a more northward-extending Gulf of Mexico. Others dispute this so-called "capture" theory and contend that it never, even in the past, reached the Gulf. On its northward course across Tennessee the most important tributary it receives is the Duck, entering from the east. The largest of the short streams entering from the west is the Big Sandy, which parallels the Tennessee for a considerable distance.¹²

The Cumberland River, the other major stream besides the Tennessee which flows through the state, rises in southeastern Kentucky, runs across the northern part of Middle Tennessee, and then parallels the Tennessee River on its way across Kentucky to the Ohio. One of its upper branches, the South Fork, rises in Tennessee and flows northward into Kentucky. The other southern tributaries reach the Cumberland during its passage through Tennessee. They are the Obey, which rises in the Cumberland Plateau; the Caney Fork, which has several forks in the eastern Highland Rim but which rise in the Plateau; the Stones, which rises in the Central Basin and enters the Cumberland above Nashville; the Harpeth, which rises in the Basin but flows through

the western Rim and enters the Cumberland about half way between Nashville and Clarksville; and the short Yellow, which is entirely in the western Rim. One northern branch of the Cumberland, the Red River, rises in Tennessee, flows for a few miles through Kentucky, and enters the main stream near Clarksville.

The most important of the rivers which flow across West Tennessee into the Mississippi is the well-named Forked Deer, which with its numerous branches and forks drains more than the upper half of the region. The Obion, the largest branch, has its North and South forks rising in the eastern part of the Coastal Plain, and receives a short branch from Reelfoot Lake about where it turns southward and flows through the Bottoms parallel to the Mississippi to reach the Forked Deer only a few miles from its mouth. A few miles to the northeast the Forked Deer branches into the North and South forks; the former has a large branch called the Middle Fork; and these three streams drain most of the central portion of West Tennessee. Farther south the Mississippi receives the Hatchie and the Wolf, both of which rise in Mississippi, and between them the smaller Loosahatchie, which rises in Hardeman County. Near the mouths of these streams are the more important of the Chickasaw Bluffs, the one near the Wolf being the site of Memphis.

Natural Resources—The soils of Tennessee constitute its most important natural resource. Throughout the history of the state the great majority of its people have been engaged in agriculture or in the fabricating of the products, direct or indirect, of the soil. Some attention has been given to the subjects of soils and agricultural possibilities in connection with the description of the underlying rocks of the several natural divisions, as the major soil belts are coextensive with those physiographic regions. In the Unaka Mountains region the soils are rocky and shallow. Those in the East Tennessee and Sequatchie valleys are of varying fertility, with the bottom lands being naturally the most productive. The sandy loams of the Cumberland Plateau are relatively low in fertility, as is also the case with much of the western Highland Rim. Those of the eastern Rim, derived from pure limestone, are more productive. The most fertile areas of the state are in the Central Basin and the Coastal Plain of West Tennessee.

Closely identified with agricultural potentialities are climate and weather. Tennessee lies in the temperate zone and has a mild climate. The average annual temperature is 60° F., and extremes of heat and cold are not customary. The length of the growing season varies from about 150 days in the mountains of East Tennessee to about 220 days in West Tennessee. The prevailing winds are westerly or southwesterly, and the state is open to the air masses which pass along the Gulf Coast and up the Atlantic seaboard as well as those moving from Oklahoma to the Great Lakes. Those from the Gulf are usually moisture-

laden and provide the state with an adequate rainfall, averaging about 50 inches per year.

The principal cash crops in Tennessee are cotton and tobacco, but from the point of view of acreage and total farm value corn usually ranks first and another feed crop, hay, ranks just behind cotton in this regard. The cultivation of corn is widely distributed, including almost every farm in the state, whereas cotton is grown mainly in West Tennessee and tobacco is concentrated in upper East Tennessee, and in northwest Middle and northeast West Tennessee. Wheat, fruits, and vegetables are also important farm crops. Livestock and associated products are of major importance to the cash income of Tennessee farmers. Tennessee is the leading dairy state in the South and second in the production of hogs. Beef cattle are of increasing importance and the state has long been well known for its mules and horses, especially the Tennessee walking horse. The greatest concentration of livestock production is in Middle Tennessee, although all four of the largest cities are important packing centers. In many other ways agricultural products have been used increasingly as raw materials for manufacturing. For example, Memphis is one of the largest cottonseed processing centers in the world.

Of Tennessee's natural resources forests are among the most important. When white men first visited this part of the country, they found most of the land covered with trees, but less than half of the state's area is in forests today. This includes the regions leased or owned by the state and federal governments, especially the state and national forests, as well as those under private ownership. Every county contains some commercial timber, but the most productive forest areas are in the Unaka Mountains, on the Cumberland Plateau, and in the lowlands of West Tennessee. Because of its location and surface features, Tennessee has many different kinds of trees, more than 150 separate species. About two-thirds of the state's current lumber production is from hardwoods and the remainder from softwoods. Tennessee is the leading producer in the South of hardwood lumber, with oak supplying about forty per cent of that production. Cedar, pine, and hemlock are the leading softwood trees in the state. About sixty per cent of the commercial red cedar land in the United States is in Tennessee. Due to the long history of wasteful exploitation and the delay in instituting adequate reforestation programs, by 1930 Tennessee's forest resources had been seriously depleted. Since that time rapid progress in the conservation movement has resulted in a revitalizing of the lumbering industry.

Tennessee is one of the leading states in the South in the variety and value of mineral production. For the first time in the state's history the total value of its mineral production reached \$100,000,000 in 1952. There are about thirty minerals of notable economic importance but a complete list would include more than fifty. In the order of their current (1957) values of produc-

tion, the most important are coal, stone, cement, zinc, phosphate, sand and gravel, copper, barite, iron, clay, lime, and marble.*

Usually ranking first in both value and tonnage is coal, of the bituminous variety, beds of which occur in an area of about 4,400 square miles of the Cumberland Plateau. Annual production usually exceeds \$25,000,000 in value. Its availability has been an important factor in the industrial development of Tennessee. Portland cement is made in considerable quantities in East Tennessee, and stone, other than that used in the production of lime and cement, is an important product. As mentioned above, the sandstones of the Cumberland Plateau are coming into increasing use as a building material.

Tennessee is rapidly becoming one of the leading zinc-producing states in the nation as a result of the recent expansion of the mining of the deposits in the Great Valley of East Tennessee. Tennessee ranks second in the production of phosphate, which is found chiefly in Middle Tennessee. As a result of the availability of hydroelectric power, Tennessee has become the world's leading center for the production of elemental phosphorus. Sand and gravel, sixth among Tennessee's minerals, are found along the major streams, on the Cumberland Plateau, and on the West Tennessee Coastal Plain. Mention has already been made of the copper deposits in the Ducktown Basin in the southeastern corner of the state which were opened in 1847 and have been worked continuously since that time. The sulphur fumes which resulted from the smelting process destroyed practically all vegetation in the surrounding area, but after the damage was done it was discovered that they could be utilized in the production of a by-product even more valuable than the copper—sulphuric acid.

Tennessee ranks high in the production of barite, which occurs in lower East Tennessee. Iron ore is found in the Unaka Mountains region, along the eastern base of the Cumberland Plateau, and in the western Highland Rim. These resources have been exploited somewhat spasmodically at various periods, but their significance in the state's economy was relatively greater in the past than at the present time. Abundant, varied, and widely distributed are the clay resources of Tennessee. Most famous are the plastic sedimentary clays of the western area, which are sent to the principal pottery centers in the United States. The state probably ranks first in the mining of ball clay. In the limestone region of Middle Tennessee, the clays are usually residual and alluvial but are used extensively by Nashville plants. The clays found along the Holston and Tennessee rivers are the basis of an extensive heavy clay products industry in East Tennessee.

Limestone is the most widely distributed rock in Tennessee and is used

* In 1958 the rankings had changed to: cement, stone, coal, phosphate, zinc, sand and gravel, copper, clays. *American Annual*, 1960 (New York, 1960), 759.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

Chattanooga—View from Lookout Mountain

for a variety of purposes. Marble is found chiefly in the Great Valley of East Tennessee, and Knoxville is the chief center of the marble industry in the state. Some marble is also found in Middle Tennessee, in Lincoln County. Tennessee marble has been well and widely accepted throughout the nation and has been used in the construction of many notable public buildings. Other minerals of some importance in Tennessee are manganese and granite, found in the northeastern corner of the state. Some beginning has recently been made in the exploitation of the manganese, but granite still remains one of the most important undeveloped resources of the Unaka Mountains. Small amounts of petroleum and natural gas are produced in the northern parts of the Cumberland Plateau and the eastern Highland Rim. Tennessee ranks about 26th among the states in mineral production, but it leads the nation in the production of pyrite, which is found in the Ducktown area.

CHAPTER I—NOTES

1. Much of this chapter is an expansion of the article on Tennessee prepared for the *Encyclopedia Americana* (New York, 1940; rev. 1959) by S. J. Folmsbee and H. C. Amick. See also Harry L. Law, *Tennessee Geography* (Oklahoma City, 1954); John Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee*, ed. by Mary U. Rothrock (Jackson, 1959); J. B. Killebrew, *Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1874); and N. M. Fenneman, *Physiography of Eastern United States* (New York, 1938).
2. W. R. Garrett, "Northern Boundary of Tennessee," *American Historical Magazine* VI (January, 1901), 18-39; John Haywood, *Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee* (reprinted, Nashville, 1915), 15-29, 487-501; Joseph H. Parks, *Felix Grundy: Champion of Democracy* (Baton Rouge, La., 1940), 122-33; *Virginia v. Tennessee*, 148 U. S. 503.
3. E. Merton Coulter, "The Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Line," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXXV (December, 1951), 269-306. Professor Coulter is not so sure that Georgia would not be able to establish its title to the narrow strip south of the 35th parallel.
4. During the 1870's J. B. Killebrew and his associate, J. M. Safford, in connection with the *Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee*, cited above, which was published as a report of the State Bureau of Agriculture, attempted to place Perry County where it rightfully belongs, in Middle Tennessee (see p. 5), and Safford also published a map at that time showing the grand division with Perry in Middle Tennessee; but the legislature failed to back them up and make the necessary change in the law. Thus Perry remained undisturbed on the official list of West Tennessee counties. In strange contrast numerous changes have been made by legislative acts in the boundary between East and Middle Tennessee. Probably the major reason for the failure to make the necessary legislative change for Perry County is the general assumption, in ignorance of what the state law actually provides, that it is in Middle Tennessee. For example, John Trotwood Moore so placed it in his *Tennessee: The Volunteer State* (4 vols., Nashville, 1923), I, 804.

5. For example, see R. S. Rankin, "The Oldest College [Tusculum] West of the Alleghanies," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 19-26. Hereafter cited E. T. H. S. *Publications*.
6. See Law, *Tennessee Geography*, 11.
7. Paul M. Fink, "Smoky Mountains History as Told in Place-Names," E. T. H. S. *Publications*, No. 6 (1934), 5. There is an extensive literature about the Great Smokies. One of the more popular works is Laura Thornborough, *The Great Smoky Mountains* (revised and enlarged, Knoxville, 1956).
8. Killebrew, *Introduction to Resources*, 2.
9. *Ibid.*, 3.
10. Cecil Humphreys, "The History of Reelfoot Lake Region" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1938); "The Earthquakes of 1811," *American Historical Magazine*, V (July, 1900), 235-37.
11. James R. Montgomery, "The Nomenclature of the Upper Tennessee River," E. T. H. S. *Publications*, No. 28 (1956), 46-57. Haywood's *Natural and Aboriginal History* was published originally in Nashville, and his *Civil and Political History* in Knoxville, both in 1823. For illustrations of the early use of Tennessee for the present Little Tennessee see maps on pages 3, 51, and 72 of this volume of this history.
12. Donald Davidson, *The Tennessee, I: The Old River, Frontier to Secession* (New York, 1946), 1-16; Fenneman, *Eastern United States*, 275-77.

CHAPTER II

Indian Inhabitants

PREHISTORIC INDIANS and Archaeological Excavations—Human habitation of Tennessee began far back in the dim recesses of time. Thousands of years before this country was inhabited by the Cherokee and other historic tribes found here by the first white explorers, prehistoric Indians had found their way into what is now Tennessee. Knowledge of these “first Tennesseans” was scanty and inaccurate until very recently, and they were usually referred to as a separate race of “Mound Builders” since the chief remains they left behind were the great number of mounds scattered throughout Tennessee. Before the beginning of the twentieth century many of these mounds had been excavated and their contents examined, but with such unscientific procedures that most of the valuable data they contained was misused or lost.

It was not until after the Tennessee Valley Authority was created in 1933 that a well-organized program of scientific archaeological investigation of Indian remains in Tennessee was begun. The occasion for the inauguration of this work was the sudden realization, while the Norris Dam was under construction, that unless something were done quickly the waters of Norris Lake would cover many mounds and village sites, and priceless archaeological data would be irretrievably lost. By a combination of efforts of the United States government, the state of Tennessee, and the universities of Tennessee and Kentucky arrangements were made for scientific excavation of some of those sites and the recovery of the data before it would be too late. As the program of TVA expanded and other dams were built, the archaeological program was extended to other sites, and in due time the excavation work was expanded to include some other parts of the state even though the mounds in those areas were not in imminent danger of receiving a deluge. As a result of these activities there is now available a great mass of information about Tennessee's prehistoric and historic Indians. Report of the excavations have been published,¹ and the records of the excavating, together with the skeletons, pottery, arrowheads, and other artifacts, have been deposited at the University of Tennessee. Eventually many of these relics will be placed on public display in the McClung Museum, which is a part of the current building program of the University.

The first Indians to come to America, presumably from Asia across Bering Strait about 25,000 or more years ago, were given the name Paleo-Indians because their way of life was similar to Paleolithic or Old Stone Age peoples of the Old World. These Indians were of a wandering type, and there is evidence that some of them camped and hunted in the Highland Rim region of Tennessee. Although they remained a long time, apparently they did not settle down in actual villages.* The second great wave of Indian migration occurred during the Mesolithic period, a transition stage between the Old and New Stone ages. Some of these people, known as Archaic Indians because of their type of culture, became the first village dwellers in what is now Tennessee.

The earliest known settlement, made about 7,000 years ago, was located near the junction of Cypress Creek and the Tennessee River in Benton County, but there were numerous others along the lower Tennessee, some of which may date as recently as 3,000 years ago. These Archaic Indians lived in substantial dwellings and had a unique practice of burying their dead in trash heaps of accumulated clam shells and animal bones. Their houses had no fireplaces, since heat was not needed in view of the warm weather during the Altithermal period. Cooking probably was done outside over open fires or in roasting pits. The weapon points and other artifacts found in the excavations reveal that they had advanced considerably beyond the Paleo-Indians in the use of flint and other stones. In this period before the use of the bow and arrow one of their chief weapons was the spear thrower, with which spears could be hurled through the air at animals or enemies.

The next inhabitants of Tennessee were the Early Woodland Indians, who probably migrated here from the North when the Altithermal period came to an end about 1500 B. C. and cold weather again blanketed the northern climes and moved southward. It was these Indians who were the first Tennesseans to use bows and arrows and engage in the making of pottery. They were succeeded in this area by a people now designated as the Middle Woodland Indians, who were responsible for certain cultural innovations of significance. For example, they used burial mounds for the interment of their dead, a cultural trait already characteristic of tribes in Middle America and the Hopewell Indians located north of the Ohio River. The mounds were not built all at once; they grew gradually as more bodies were added, reaching dimensions of ten feet high and fifty feet in diameter. Some of the later burial mounds

* Recent excavations in the lower Tennessee Valley indicate that this area was one of the most densely inhabited by Paleo-Indians in the United States. Also, these nomadic hunters of the Ice Age, as they are sometimes called, seem to have congregated during the winter months in temporary villages and to have mingled with their successors, the Archaic Indians, and probably were absorbed by them. Information from T. M. N. Lewis, University of Tennessee.

were even larger, such as a notable one in Stewart County. It is also believed that the Middle Woodland Indians introduced the growing of corn into Tennessee.

Another group of mound builders in Tennessee built a different type of mound—for ceremonial rather than burial purposes, called Temple Mounds. These were the Early Mississippian Indians, so called because they concentrated in the Mississippi Valley, moving from the Gulf of Mexico northward toward the Great Lakes. Those west of the Mississippi belonged to a language family called Caddoan, and those east of the river were mainly Muskogean. The Early Mississippian Indians came into Tennessee and spread out over most of its area about 1000 or 1100 A.D.

A unique feature of the temple mounds revealed by scientific excavation is that they are made up of several layers, sometimes as many as five or six. Apparently, a group of two or three ceremonial temples would be built and then many years later, when worn out, would be razed or otherwise destroyed. A blanket of several feet of soil was added and another group of temples constructed upon the new summit. This process would be repeated several times, with the top one or two layers seemingly being the work of later historic, or near-historic tribes who either succeeded the Early Mississippian tribe or infiltrated with it. As a result of this procedure these mounds grew to considerable size.

The method of construction of dwelling houses by the Early Mississippians was also unique. Long saplings would be set upright in trenches to supply the main part of the walls, and the tops of the saplings would be bent over and woven together to form a thatched roof. Their pottery work was also quite distinctive, although they seem to have borrowed their stamped pottery ideas from neighboring Georgia Indians. Rather strangely, no graves of the Early Mississippian Indians have been found. They must have burned their dead or stored them in "bone houses" which were later destroyed.²

Semihistoric Tennessee Indians—The dividing line between prehistoric and historic Indians in Tennessee is very indistinct and difficult to mark accurately. The present author therefore has resorted to the term semihistoric to describe the transition period between the two. By prehistoric is meant before the time of written records, and for information concerning this type of Indian we are dependent largely upon the results of archaeological investigations. The historic Indians came into contact with white people, who left written descriptions of their civilization. For Tennessee Indians there is a gap of more than a hundred years between the visits by the Spanish DeSoto and Pardo expeditions, 1539-1567, and the first French and English contacts in 1673. It was not until near the end of the seventeenth century that Indian-white relationships became sufficiently frequent to constitute a real beginning of the historic period. It is to this preceding twilight zone back to the time

of DeSoto that the term semihistoric has been applied, a period for which archaeological data are supplemented by a small amount of historic information.

The Tennessee Indians of that time had a Late Mississippian culture and except for the Cherokee, Shawnee, and Yuchi Indians were largely of the Muskogean language group. There were three large divisions of the Muskogean peoples. The most important was the Muskogean proper, who occupied the region between the Natchez Indians along the lower Mississippi and the Timucua in northern Florida and were made up of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Alabama,* and Creek Indians. Of these only the Chickasaw and the Creeks are believed to have inhabited any portion of Tennessee. The Choctaw, from whom the Chickasaw had seceded, lived mainly in south central Mississippi. Both at the time of DeSoto's expedition and the first French contacts during the latter part of the seventeenth century the towns of the Chickasaw Indians were also located in Mississippi, some distance southeast of the site of Memphis. They claimed as their hunting grounds, however, all of West Tennessee.³ If and when they actually occupied this area, including the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River which bear their name, is uncertain. Unfortunately there has not been enough scientific excavation of mounds in West Tennessee to supply conclusive evidence.

In contrast, the excavation of East Tennessee mounds in connection with TVA activities has unearthed much evidence which when related to other data indicates the occupation of this region by the Creek Indians from shortly before 1300 to about 1700 or 1715. The name "Creek" refers not to one Indian tribe but to a confederation of tribes, which occupied much of present Georgia and Alabama and northern Florida in addition to their occupation of East Tennessee. The origin of the name Creek is rather curious. Early English traders called the Ocmulgee River in Georgia Ocheese Creek and the Indians on its banks Ocheese Creek Indians. This term was shortened to Creek Indians and was applied to all the Indians of that great confederacy.

These Indians had two types of towns, or settlement groups: red towns and white towns. The red towns were devoted to making war and the white towns to preserving peace. The latter were "old-beloved," holy places of refuge, where blood was never shed. Since it was agreed that there should never be war between the white and red divisions, they substituted for war the playing of what they called "brother of war" ball games, with white teams playing against red teams in what were important ceremonial and social events. This type of ball game was similar to and probably the ancestor of modern lacrosse. It was a rather rough game with teams of twelve or more on a side using sticks with nets on one end to drive a deer-hide ball through the opponents' goal posts. Another type of game was called chunkge (or "chunky") and was

* The Alabama, originally a Choctaw fragment, acquired a later relationship to the Creek Confederacy.

played with stone disks and long poles, which were thrown at the rolling disks. Since the Creeks developed a passion for gambling, the spectators would sometimes bet everything they owned, including their clothes, on the results of the games.

In contrast to the Early Mississippian Indians, the Creeks, like other Late Mississippians, had the custom of burying their dead. Each family buried its own, in graves dug near the house, and interred with the body food and weapons, for use on the way to the "happy hunting ground," and also most of the individual's other personal possessions. Examination of skeletons has revealed that few of the adults lived to be more than forty or forty-five years of age; infant mortality was excessive; and tooth decay, arthritis, rickets, and scurvy were prevalent. Although their diet consisted of such foods as corn, beans, squash, wild game, and fish, the people seem to have been undernourished, due in part to lack of vitamins. Probably also the purification practice required of all, regardless of age or sex, of diving four times into water immediately upon arising in the morning, even in the coldest weather, resulted in the survival of only the very fittest. The males were of medium height and muscular build and the women were delicately formed, with small hands and feet, oval-shaped faces, and regular features.

These people were adept at making and decorating pottery and also other implements and weapons. Some of the intricate designs were applied by negative painting, a rather complicated process since the design had to be conceived in reverse because the unpainted portion of the vessel formed the design. Some of this type of pottery may have been imported from the Nashville region, where negative painting was in vogue. Many shell ornaments were made, which were used as personal adornment, especially by the women. Strings of pearls were strung and copper ornaments produced. The most distinctive chieftains wore elaborate head dresses made of sheet copper, which probably came from the copper country in present-day Polk County.

Life in a Creek town centered in its public square, an outdoor council ground flanked on all four sides by buildings and having in the center the sacred fire. Each building was open on the side facing the square and was supplied with two tiers of mat-covered benches. The men of the town assembled each day to consider town affairs, receive visitors, and hear news. The principal chief was called a "miko," but there was also a "twin miko," a sort of vice-president who took over more duties as the main chief became old. Upon assembling in the morning the men purified themselves with what they called the "white drink" but which traders referred to as a "black drink." It was a type of strong tea which had the highly valued effect of producing vomiting. Then followed the ritualistic smoking of the ceremonial pipe, beginning with the principal chief and passing on to the others in strict observance of rank. During the winter the council meeting was held inside a "hot house" which

was an exact duplicate of the outdoor council ground. In addition to the daily council meetings there occurred periodically impressive assemblies of the whole confederacy.⁴

Another tribe, of uncertain origin, which temporarily occupied East Tennessee during the semihistoric period was the Yuchi, or "far away people," who claimed to be "Children of the Sun." They were the most mysterious of Southern Indians, due largely to the fact that they were referred to by various other names. Archaeologists recently have come to the conclusion that they were the inhabitants of the "Chisca province" referred to in the accounts of the DeSoto expedition and which was later invaded by the Spaniards under Juan Pardo in 1566. According to the Pardo report a battle was fought at a fortified village where the people lived in underground houses. Excavation of Yuchi sites in East Tennessee has revealed that these people lived in houses built partly underground and that they fortified their villages. Thus archaeology has corroborated history.

It is also now believed that the Yuchi were the same as the Westo Indians who plagued the young English colony of Carolina from the time of its establishment in 1670 until about 1682. Tomahittan probably was still another name for Yuchi. In 1673 the Virginia explorers James Needham and Gabriel Arthur visited in East Tennessee a tribe of Indians whom they called Tomahittans. They reported that their towns were fortified and that these Indians were accustomed to raiding the English settlements in Carolina as well as the Spaniards in Florida. The Yuchi did not remain in Tennessee long after 1714. On that date, when one of their leading towns, Chestowee, on the Hiwassee River, was about to be attacked by the powerful Cherokee Indians, under incitement by a Carolina trader, the warriors of the town, fearing capture and enslavement, massacred their own townsmen and then committed suicide themselves. Following this incident the Yuchi abandoned the East Tennessee country, most of them going to the Chattahoochee River in Georgia and affiliating with the Creek Confederacy.⁵

Another non-Muskogean tribe, the Shawnee Indians, who were of the Algonquian language group, occupied much of Tennessee during the semihistoric and on into the historic period. The French had a trading post among them on the Cumberland River near the site of Nashville in 1714, and on their early maps called that river the Chaouanon, the French name for Shawnee. Soon after that date the Shawnee were driven out of the Tennessee country by combined action of the Chickasaw and Cherokee. They first settled near the mouth of the Cumberland, but later they were induced by the French to move across the river and up the valley to the mouth of the Scioto.⁶

Historic Tribes: The Cherokee Indians—It will be recalled that mention has been made of the Cherokee as another non-Muskogean tribe which occupied East Tennessee along with the Creeks and the Yuchi during the period

we have called semihistoric. Discussion of these Indians has been postponed to this point because they also had the most important relationship to Tennessee during the strictly historic period. After the Creek, Yuchi, and Shawnee Indians had been expelled during the early years of the eighteenth century, the Cherokee were the only Indians who actually occupied any land in Tennessee, although the Chickasaw owned West Tennessee and contested with the Cherokee the title of much of Middle Tennessee. The towns of the Cherokee were located in the southern Appalachians, along the Little Tennessee and Hiwassee rivers in East Tennessee and in the neighboring regions of Georgia and North and South Carolina, but their claims extended to the Ohio River on the north, to the Kanawha (the present New River) on the east, and to the northward-flowing Tennessee on the west.⁷ In view of the absence of Indian towns during the historic period in all of Tennessee except the southeastern corner and in most of Kentucky and western Virginia, this immense area became something of an Indian "no man's land" traversed by many tribes with war and hunting expeditions.

The Cherokee Indians were the largest and most important tribe in southeastern United States during the historic period, justifying the name they gave themselves of *Ani-Yunwiya* or "principal people." They were kinsmen of the Iroquois and of that language stock, which seems to explain the origin of the name Cherokee. At the time of the DeSoto expedition their Muskogean neighbors referred to them as "Tciloki" or "people of a different speech," which was transcribed as "Achelaque" by the Spaniards. The Cherokee themselves adopted it in the form "Tsalagi." From these terms was distilled by corruption and variations in spelling the name Cherokee.⁸

It is uncertain when and from where the Cherokee first came into the Southeast and into Tennessee. It was formerly believed that they did not come into this area until shortly before the dawn of historic times. The modern trend is to consider them much more ancient inhabitants, possibly even antedating the Creeks in this part of the country, arriving at least a thousand years ago. The civilization of the early Cherokee was an advanced Woodland type and it is probable that they were the makers of the southeastern stamped pottery already mentioned. This stamped pottery thesis would indicate that they established themselves first in Georgia and then in North and South Carolina before extending their occupation to include East Tennessee. Later their culture was of the Early Mississippian type. At the beginning of the historic era the Cherokee were living in about eighty towns distributed among four large groups: the Lower settlements, along the Tugaloo and Keowee rivers in South Carolina;* the Middle settlements, the real heart of the nation,

* The Lower towns on the west bank of the Tugaloo were in what is now Georgia. Many towns farther west in northern Georgia later occupied by the Cherokee were until about 1755 held by the Creeks.



Nashville—North Mural in State Office Building

(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

along the headwaters of the Tuskaseegee and Little Tennessee rivers in North Carolina; the Valley towns, also in North Carolina along the Valley, Notteley, and upper Hiwassee rivers; and the Upper or Overhill towns, across the mountains from the English settlements in South Carolina, and lying mainly along the Little Tennessee River but including some towns on the Tellico and the Hiwassee. They spoke three dialects. The one spoken by the people of the Lower settlements is now extinct; the Indians of the Qualla Reservation in western North Carolina still use the dialect of the Middle settlements; the one used in the Valley and Overhill towns is now spoken by the Indians of Oklahoma. Early English traders arbitrarily divided the Cherokee towns into three groups instead of four, lumping the Middle and Valley towns together as one group and calling them the Middle Cherokee.⁹

Although the Cherokee nation as a whole had a principal chief, the political, military, and religious life was centered in the towns, which varied in size from a dozen to around two hundred families. On the west side of the public square in the center of each town was built the council house or temple. Grouped around the temple and square were the dwelling houses, which like those of other Late Mississippian Indians were built of upright logs. In the center of the dirt floor was a scooped-out fireplace, flanked by a hearth stone for use in baking corn bread. At one end were the beds, made of saplings and woven splints. In cold weather the families slept in the adjacent "hot house," a small, dirt-covered, cone shaped structure, also supplied with beds and a fireplace in which a fire was kept burning all day and banked at night. Similar hot houses were used by the medicine men for giving "sweat baths" as a means of treating certain diseases and also as a purification ritual.

The council house was used mainly as a temple for religious rites but also as a public hall for civil and military councils. Usually large enough to seat 500 persons, it was seven-sided to correspond to the seven clans of the Cherokee Nation, with each clan being given seats in a particular section. Seven large pillars outlined the outer walls, and within were two concentric series of seven posts each as well as a large central pillar. Three tiers of benches lined the walls, with one area, near the sacred seventh pillar of the outer wall, being reserved for the main officials, three of whom had special seats with high backs. Near the central pillar and in front of the officials' seats was the altar, at which a fire was kept perpetually burning except for periodic and ceremonial extinguishing and rekindling. Lieutenant Henry Timberlake, who visited the Cherokee in 1761-62, described the town house at Chote as having "the appearance of a small mountain at a little distance." He commented on its gloomy interior, "extremely dark, having, besides the door, which is so narrow that but one at a time can pass, and that after much winding and turning, but one small aperture to let the smoak [*sic*] out, which is so ill-contrived, that most of it settles in the roof of the house."¹⁰

Cherokee Government and Religion—Cherokee society was based on the family and the clan, with descent being on the maternal side since the Cherokee had not yet emerged from a matriarchal type of civilization at the beginning of their historic period. Each individual belonged to the clan of his mother, but had a close relationship to his father's clan and was ordinarily expected to marry into the clan of either his maternal grandfather or paternal grandfather. Intermarriage within the clan was strictly forbidden. In any particular town all seven of the nation's clans* had members; thus, all the Cherokees were linked by bonds of kinship.

The towns were the most important units of government and among them the seven "Mother Towns"** of the seven clans for special significance. Each town had a "king," elected by the town council, and also usually a "Great War Chief," elected by the principal warriors. The national government paralleled the local. There was a paramount chief for the nation, who with the aid of seven counselors conducted civil and religious affairs. Two of these counselors were called the right hand man and the speaker, and sat next to the paramount chief at council meetings. There was also a separate military organization headed by the chief warrior, who had two titles, "Greatly Honored Man" and "Raven," the latter coming from his insignia of office, a raven's skin which was hung around his neck. He was aided by three assistants and seven counselors. There were numerous minor officials, including medicine men or conjurers, whose duties were a combination of magic, fortune telling, practical surgery, and spiritual comforting.

Women had an important role in time of war, particularly the one called "War Woman" by the whites and "Honored Woman" by the Indians. She sat in council meetings and had a vote in deciding for or against war, and she also had the power of life and death over captives. A captive whose life was spared was usually adopted by one of the clans. The last "Honored Woman" of the Cherokee was Nancy Ward, who more than once warned white settlers of the danger of attack and saved a number of white captives from being burned at the stake.

The capital of the Cherokee Nation shifted according to the residence of the paramount chief. In 1715 it was Tugaloo, one of the Lower towns in northeastern Georgia. By 1730 it had been moved to the Overhill country, first to Tanasi and then to Chote, both on the Little Tennessee River. Chote remained the capital until the town was abandoned and the system of national government was changed. The system of centralized control described above was not as effective as would appear at first glance. There was very little

* The seven clans were named Wolf, Deer, Bird, Red Paint, Blue, Wild Potatoes, and Long Hairs. Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South*, 24. Malone inaccurately translates the name of the last clan as Twisters.

** Tennessee, Kituwah, Ustenary, Tellico, Estoetowie, Keowee, and Noyohee. *Ibid.*

compulsive authority for enforcement. Each town was inclined to believe that it was a law unto itself in disregard of national policy; and much the same may be said concerning individual Indians, except where tradition and superstition were involved. After trade relations with the English colony of South Carolina had begun about the beginning of the eighteenth century, the colonial government was so concerned about the lack of an effective national organization on the part of the Cherokee that they induced them to elect an "Emperor" to rule over the whole nation and to represent it in relations with the whites.

Closely related to the civil government of the Cherokee was their religious organization. The expected holders of governmental office were dedicated in infancy or childhood and received special training. This was particularly true of the medicine men, who were trained through fasting, study of traditional beliefs, and memorizing of sacred medicinal formulas. The leading conjurer, or "High War Priest," performed the usual functions of a holy man, resorting to superstition, prestidigitation, and showmanship to achieve his aims. Because of the fear of the supernatural, few important steps were taken without ritual and ceremony. Dietary habits were influenced by superstition, with good health supposedly resulting from the practice of throwing fat into the fire prior to eating a meal. Also, the meat from most birds and beasts of prey was considered unclean and was not eaten. Medical practice was influenced by the belief that miraculous powers were inherent in certain herbs, such as ginseng root, and in rites performed by the medicine men. In due time the white people were to learn that entirely apart from superstition many of the herbs and drugs of "Indian medicine" actually did have curative powers.

As was the case with other Indians, the Cherokee had a vague conception of Creation as well as a belief in life after death. Like other Late Mississippian Indians, they placed the personal possessions of the deceased in the grave for use on the way to the "happy hunting ground"; and presumably the sitting position in which the corpse was placed assured a good start on that journey. The Cherokee believed in a mysterious Being called "Yowa,"* who was conceived of as a unity of three other Beings, called the "Elder Fires Above," which in turn had been responsible for the creation of the sun, the moon, and stars, and all living things. Then the Elder Fires had returned to the seventh heaven in the sky and left the sun and the moon to finish creation and govern the world. The moon was the deity which controlled Cherokee ceremonial life and determined the times for the holding of the seven sacred ceremonies which were regularly observed, six of them annually and the seventh every seven years.

The six annual ceremonies were (1) The First New Moon of Spring

* The similarity of this name to the Hebrew "Yahweh," or Jehovah, was one reason Adair believed the Indians were a lost tribe of Israel.

Festival, held in March when the grass began to grow; (2) the New Green Corn Festival in August when the corn was ripe enough to eat; (3) the Ripe Corn Ceremony in late September when the corn was ready for harvesting; (4) the Great New Moon or Big Medicine Ceremony at the first appearance of the October moon; (5) the Reconciliation, or Friends Made Ceremony ten days after the fourth; and the Exulting or Bounding Bush Festival a short time later. All six were held at the capital and were attended by great crowds from all over the nation. The remaining festival, the Seventh Year Thanksgiving Ceremony, was held every seventh year following a preparation of seven days, but was more of a reconsecration of the high priest than a festival for the people. These festivals were characterized by special dances, some by men and others by women; by ritual bathing, with even infants being plunged beneath the water seven times; by crystal-gazing, with those who saw themselves lying down being doomed to die within the year; by extinguishing and rekindling the sacred fire; by fasting followed by feasting; and by prayers and sacrifices to the Supreme Being. The strictly religious ceremonies were abandoned after the Cherokee became Christians, but the more secular ones were continued even into modern times.

Cherokee Life—By the late prehistoric times the Cherokee, like the other Southern Indians, had become farmers, although they still depended on hunting and fishing for their meat supply. Their chief crop was corn, which was so much their staff of life that its cultivation was accompanied, as we have seen, by ritualistic ceremonies. Other crops grown were beans, squash, gourds, pumpkins, and sunflowers. To supplement the food supply, particularly in the spring, considerable use was made of nuts, wild fruits, birds' eggs, mushrooms, and anything else in their environment that was edible. The farming was carried on mainly by the women and old men, especially during periods of warfare. Between wars, however, the men did much of the work, with some assistance from the women. In connection with farming and the food supply there was a communistic aspect to Cherokee society. Each town had a communal granary as a starvation preventative, which was supplied in part from the "town plantation," which was made up of several plots of ground owned and cultivated in common. The remainder of the food stored in the granary came from the individuals' cultivated patches. Salt for cooking and meat preserving was obtained from salt springs or "licks," or from traders.¹¹

The crafts of the Cherokee were similar to those of other Southern Indians, but in addition to their stamped pottery, they made a specialty of making stone pipes, which were skillfully carved in the shapes of birds or animals, and occasionally in human form. The ceremonial pipes, used at council meetings, were massive affairs, sometimes weighing several pounds. The Cherokee were also adept at wood carving and in weaving baskets and mats out of

narrow strips of cane which were dyed in several colors from native vegetable dyes. By combining the different colors it was possible to create intricate designs.

Clothing was made of feathers as well as from animal skins. Skirts for the women and mantles for both sexes were made of the long feathers taken from the breasts of wild turkeys. They were sewed between narrow strips of bark, and then the strips were sewed together so that the feathers overlapped as they had on the body of the turkey. Feathers of more brilliantly colored birds were also worked into these garments as trimmings, and other kinds of feathers, particularly of eagles and cranes, were used in headdresses.

The patterns of clothing were simple. The women wore skirts and shoulder mantles and the men dressed in breech clouts and sleeveless shirts which hung down to the knees. Both sexes wore moccasins which were made like boots. The body was frequently decorated with paint or tattooing and ornamented with earrings, neckpieces of clam shells, and bracelets. Generally, the men's garb was gaudier than that of the women, and on ceremonial occasions the costumes might vary all the way from near nakedness to elaborate regalia. At the time of a visit to London in 1730 of several young Cherokee chieftains, a newspaper described their attire when presented to the royal family.

The Indian King had on a scarlet jacket, but all the rest were naked except an apron about their middle and a horse's tail hung down behind. Their faces, shoulders, etc., were spotted with red, blue and green. They had bows in their hands and painted feathers in their heads.¹²

The Cherokee were somewhat taller and more robust than other Southern Indians; they had coarse, black hair, but rather light complexions. Timberlake described them as having an "olive colour" and noted that the men usually shaved their heads or had all their hair plucked out by the roots "except a patch on the hinder part of the head, about twice the bigness of a crown-piece, which is ornamented with beads, feathers, wampum, stained deers hair, and such like baubles." He also said they slit their ears and stretched them to an enormous size in order to adorn them with pendants and rings, but he explained that this custom was borrowed from the Shawnee Indians. The women wore their hair long, "sometimes to the ground, club'd, and ornamented with ribbons of various colours."¹³

Marriage customs seem to have been influenced by the near equality of the sexes which resulted from the matriarchal system of the Cherokee. Elaborate negotiations were carried on by the kinfolk of the couple. The groom would send the bride a piece of venison as a pledge that he would provide an ample food supply; and the bride would send the groom an ear of corn as a token that the crops would be tended and the food prepared. But it seems that the life of Cherokee women was not one of drudgery and unrequited toil. They were

a respected group whose family ties were important. As mentioned above, in times of peace the men were expected to do much of the work around the home. However, possibly because of the independence of the women, marriages were of short duration and adultery so prevalent as to provoke comment from early European visitors. According to the trader James Adair, "the Cherokee were an exception to all civilized or savage nations, in having no laws against adultery," a fact he attributed to their "petticoat-government."¹⁴

Effects of Indian-White Contacts—Before the time of regular contacts with the whites, the life of the Cherokee and other Southern Indians was rather leisurely, and these people were inclined to be somewhat lazy and improvident. It did not require very much effort, in view of the abundance of game, to kill enough animals to supply the needed amounts of meat. The streams along which they lived were well stocked with fish. From the fertile soil it was possible without much cultivation to raise enough corn and other vegetables to supply their needs. There was plenty of time for fun and entertainment, for dancing, ball playing, and other sports. The Cherokee as well as the Creeks played the game called "ball play," the ancestor of modern lacrosse, and also became inveterate gamblers on the result, after the whites had taught them this vice. Chunkge was also played, and the making of the disk-like Chunkge stones became an important art.

Although warfare was an important occupation, especially for the men, wars were relatively few and far between before the white people came and incited one tribe to war against another as a part of their own international rivalries. Normally, the neighboring tribes were at peace and engaged in a considerable amount of commerce, transporting goods along the Indian trails and on the rivers in their dugout canoes. But with the development of trade relations with the whites not only did wars become more prevalent, but hunting became a business instead of a sport. Also, the status of the Indian women gradually declined as the males increasingly monopolized those important activities. Hunting expeditions became regular and large scale affairs with the aim of securing skins and furs to exchange for the white man's goods. The Indians' primitive weapons for war and hunting, the bows and arrows, blow-guns, spears, and tomahawks, were replaced or supplemented by fire-arms. That development reduced greatly the Indians' independence, for it made them dependent on the whites for a regular supply of ammunition. Any serious interruption of that supply would place a tribe in desperate straits. Other European goods gradually became necessities and replaced or reduced the Indians' crafts. From the whites the Indians obtained horses and other domesticated animals and learned better methods of agriculture; and by their missionaries they were taught Christianity. But while adopting the white man's religion, the Indians also acquired many of his vices to add to their own.

In a similar way white civilization was influenced by the contacts with the Indians, with both beneficial and injurious results. The white man's diet has been greatly enriched by food products contributed by the American Indian, especially corn, but also potatoes, tomatoes, squash, beans, pumpkins, and other vegetables. The billion dollar tobacco industry had its origin in a weed first cultivated by American aborigines. The same natives taught the white pioneers the basic fundamentals of how to survive in a wilderness environment. On the other hand, in retaliation against the savages' methods of warfare the whites came to adopt practices equally savage in character. The occupation by the Indians of great stretches of country of which they were making only superficial use stimulated the white man's greed, and in the long run the Indians were dispossessed, frequently by dishonorable means. It is argued, of course, that Indians' communal way of life and their inability to grasp completely the concept of private ownership of property made it difficult for them to resist these encroachments. And it must be admitted that today millions of white people gain subsistence from the same extent of acreage which once could support only a few thousand natives, and it may be said that the Indians were in effect the inevitable casualties to the march of civilization and progress. Even so, we should not dismiss too lightly humanitarian considerations or ignore the marks which the struggle left engraved on the characters of the people, both white and red.

CHAPTER II—NOTES

1. For example, see William S. Webb, *An Archaeological Survey of the Norris Basin in Eastern Tennessee*, U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin* No. 118 (Washington, 1938); Thomas M. N. Lewis and Madeline Kneberg, *Prehistory of the Chickamauga Basin in Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1941, mimeographed); and Lewis and Kneberg, *Hiwassee Island: An Archaeological Account of Four Tennessee Indian Peoples* (Knoxville, 1946). Professors Lewis and Kneberg have also prepared a popular summary of extant information: *Tribes That Slumber: Indian Times in the Tennessee Region* (Knoxville, 1958), which was followed to a large extent in the preparation of this chapter.
2. *Ibid.*, 3-89. For more detail see Lewis and Kneberg, *Hiwassee Island*, *passim*.
3. R. S. Cotterill, *The Southern Indians* (Norman, Okla., 1954), 6-8, 11-12; James H. Malone, *The Chickasaw Nation* (Louisville, 1922), *passim*. James Adair, *History of the American Indians*, ed. by S. C. Williams (Johnson City, Tenn., 1930), deals largely with the Chickasaw Indians, but is somewhat unreliable because of the author's attempts to prove his untenable theory that the Indians were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.
4. Lewis and Kneberg, *Tribes that Slumber*, 82-136. See also their *Hiwassee Island*, *passim*.
5. Lewis and Kneberg, *Tribes that Slumber*, 139-47. See also John R. Swanton, *Early History of the Creek Indians and their Neighbors*, U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin* No. 73 (Washington, 1922), 188-91, 286-312.

6. J. G. M. Ramsey, *The Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Charleston, 1853), 45, 79; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 4; Lawrence H. Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution* (9 vols. to date, New York, 1936—), IV, 153-60; Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History* (1959 ed.), 206-08. Cf. Charles A. Hanna, *The Wilderness Trail* (2 vols., New York, 1911), I, 119-60.
7. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 5.
8. There is an extensive literature about the prehistoric and historic Cherokee. Among the accounts by early white visitors are Edward G. Bourne (ed.), *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto* (2 vols., New York, 1922); *Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission*, House Executive Document No. 71, 76 Cong., 1 sess. (Washington, 1939); Adair, *American Indians* (who began trading with them as early as 1735); S. C. Williams (ed.), *Lieutenant Henry Timberlake's Memoirs, 1756-1765* (Johnson City, 1927); Mark Van Doren (ed.), *The Travels of William Bartram [1770's]* (New York, 1928); William Bartram, *Observations on the Creek and Cherokee Indians . . . 1789*, American Ethnological Society, *Transactions*, III (1853); and S. C. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country* (Johnson City, 1928). Secondary accounts include Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History* (1959 ed.), 216-68; James Mooney, "Myths of the Cherokee," U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, *19th Annual Report, 1897-1898*, Pt. I (Washington, 1900); John P. Brown, *Old Frontiers: The Story of the Cherokee Indians from Earliest Times to the Date of Their Removal to the West, 1838* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1938); William H. Gilbert, Jr., *The Eastern Cherokees*, U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin* No. 133 (Anthropological Papers, No. 23, Washington, 1943); Henry T. Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition* (Athens, Ga., 1956); Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 49-83; Lewis and Kneberg, *Tribes that Slumber*, 153-88. The present writer has followed mainly the last-named, since the authors have related their own and others' archaeological findings to the literature in the field.
9. *Ibid.*, 155-57; Philip M. Hamer, *Tennessee: A History* (4 vols., New York, 1933), I, 6-7. Cf. also Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West* (4 vols., New York, 1904), I, 73-74.
10. Williams (ed.), *Timberlake's Memoirs*, 59.
11. H. T. Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South*, 18-21.
12. Quoted in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 129n.
13. Williams (ed.), *Timberlake's Memoirs*, 75-77.
14. Adair, *American Indians*, 126-27, 145-46. See also Williams (ed.), *Timberlake's Memoirs*, 89.

CHAPTER III

First White Explorations and International Rivalries

THE MADOC LEGEND—There is still some difference of opinion as to the identity of the first white people to tread the soil of what is now Tennessee. The general consensus is that they were Spaniards, members of the DeSoto expedition of 1539-1541; but there are some who insist that the Spaniards were preceded by a party of Welshmen who allegedly came to this country during the twelfth century. There is a persistent legend in that part of the British Isles called Wales that in 1170 or 1171 a prince named Madoc (or Madog), annoyed by a struggle among his brothers for the throne, left the country on an exploring expedition and found his way to North America. Leaving a hundred or more men on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, he is supposed to have gone back to Wales. When he returned later on a second expedition, he was unable to find those he had left behind. According to the legend Madoc remained in the New World when this expedition returned to Wales and was never heard from again. There is also mentioned the possibility of a third expedition. The distinguished British author, Richard Hakluyt, included accounts of the voyages in his *Principal Navigations*, published near the end of the 16th century; and a considerable effort was made during the next hundred years to build up the legend as a means of bolstering British claims to North America on the ground of priority of discovery, prior to the voyages of Columbus. Modern historians, however, including those of Wales, are inclined to consider the whole Madoc story to be a fabricated myth.¹

The claim that these alleged Welsh voyagers came into the Tennessee country is based largely on a letter written in 1810 by John Sevier, former governor of Tennessee, describing a conversation he had had in 1782 with Oconostota, chief warrior of the Cherokee Indians. When asked about some "traces of very ancient, tho [*sic*] regular, fortifications" which Sevier had observed on the banks of the Hiwassee River, Oconostota had said that there was a tradition in his tribe that those forts had been built by white people who called themselves Welsh and who had been forced by his ancestors many years before to leave the Tennessee country and go to the upper reaches of the Missouri River. Also, those white people had said that they had "crossed the Great Water and landed first near the mouth of the Alabama River and had been driven up to the heads of the waters until they arrived at



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—South Mural in State Office Building

Highwassee River.”² From this Cherokee myth and from other types of evidence the theory was developed that the settlers left behind by one of the Madoc expeditions were driven northward from the site of Mobile and for their defense had built a number of forts. These included, it was claimed, not only those on the banks of the Hiwassee, the remains of which are no longer visible, but also the more substantial stone forts, the remains of which can still be seen at DeSoto Falls, Alabama, Fort Mountain, Georgia, and near Manchester, Tennessee. It was also contended that the light-skinned Mandan Indians along the upper Missouri were the descendants of those Welsh people.

It is an interesting theory but not susceptible of proof. During the 1790's, as a result of various reports that there were “Welsh Indians” in America who could speak and understand the Welsh language, a Welshman named John Evans came over to investigate. He joined a Spanish expedition at St. Louis and spent some time with the Mandan Indians. On his return he reported that he was unable to find any “Welsh Indians.” Proponents of the theory, however, claim that his word was not reliable since he was at that time trying to obtain a government position with the Spaniards. He would have realized that any report of evidence seeming to confirm the Madoc legend would undermine Spain's claim to America and reduce his chances of getting a job. During the 1870's the legend had a revival when the artist George Catlin published his sketches and descriptions of the Mandan Indians and produced a list of nine Mandan words which he thought resembled words in the Welsh language. According to the Welsh historian, however, Catlin's sketches “were on a decidedly higher level than his philology.”³ The alleged similarity to Welsh was largely imaginary. Also, recent scientific archaeological excavations in the vicinity of some of the old stone forts have failed to uncover any evidence to substantiate the theory that they were built by Welshmen, and it is the belief of archaeologists that they were the work of American Indians. Thus the whole Madoc legend rests on a very slight foundation and cannot be accepted as fact. It remains merely an interesting possibility.

Spanish Explorations—After the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 several Spanish explorers laid the groundwork for an immense Spanish empire in the New World. As every schoolboy knows, one of the most noted of these explorers was Hernando de Soto, who landed with a considerable number of soldiers on the western coast of Florida in 1539 and after wandering in the southeastern part of what is now the United States, eventually reached the Mississippi River in 1541. The route he followed has never been determined exactly, but an approximation of it, based on a study of accounts written by members of the expedition, may be found in the *Final Report of the DeSoto Expedition Commission*, published by the United States government in 1939.⁴ According to this report these Spaniards, after crossing

Georgia, the edge of South Carolina, and the southwestern corner of North Carolina, entered East Tennessee in early June, 1540, along the valley of the Hiwassee River. Leaving this river, they followed an Indian war trail to the banks of the Tennessee a few miles above the site of Chattanooga. A short distance down the river they came to an island occupied by some Indians called Chiaha, a branch of the Creek Confederacy. The DeSoto Commission identified this place as Burns Island, the last island in the Tennessee above the Tennessee-Alabama line.⁵ Subsequent excavations and studies, however, have convinced some archaeologists⁶ that this was not the site of the Chiaha town, and they are inclined to locate it at Williams Island, nearer the site of Chattanooga.

The Spaniards camped at this island for more than three weeks in order to rest their weary horses. For fifteen days of that time the Indians stayed with them, playing and swimming with the soldiers and helping them in every way. But "on the 19th of the month" they ran away, abandoning their town, because DeSoto had "asked for women." They could not be induced to return, even though DeSoto ordered their cornfields destroyed, until he had assured them that "he did not wish any Indian women since it cost them so dearly to give them to him."⁷ Also while at Chiaha DeSoto sent two scouts northward to search for the province of Chisca in which Indians had told them they could find gold. These scouts were unable to find any signs of gold and rejoined the expedition farther down the Tennessee River.

Thus it is generally agreed that the DeSoto expedition cut across the southeastern corner of Tennessee and that two scouts penetrated northward some distance above Chattanooga. What is not definitely resolved is the question as to whether the next year, when the expedition reached the Mississippi River, it arrived at the site of Memphis or some distance to the south in Mississippi, either at Commerce Landing, in Tunica County, or even farther south at Sunflower Landing. All three of these alternatives were examined with meticulous care by the DeSoto Expedition Commission, which came to the conclusion, based on what appear to be very sound arguments, that DeSoto reached and crossed the Mississippi at the most southern of the places mentioned, Sunflower Landing, Mississippi.⁸ Memphis historians, however, refused to be reconciled and remained unconvinced. They still held that the expedition crossed the river at the fourth Chickasaw Bluff, the site of Memphis, and presented strong arguments to sustain their contention. A few years later another survey was made by qualified archaeologists, whose report challenged the conclusions of the DeSoto Commission. Although they admitted that they had not examined certain bases of that commission's contention, they still claimed that

General archaeological probabilities at the present time are, in our opinion, best satisfied with the Commerce Landing or Tunica theory, though certain conditions favor still more the Memphis theory, as yet unchecked by first hand archaeological data.⁹

After crossing the Mississippi in June, 1541, the DeSoto expedition traveled extensively west of the river and finally returned to its banks, where DeSoto died in the spring of 1542 and was buried in the "Father of Waters." About twenty-five years later Spanish explorers again penetrated into Tennessee. Probably still hopeful of finding the gold which Indians had told DeSoto could be found in the "Chisca province," Juan Pardo in 1566 and again in 1567 led expeditions from Florida which reached the same Chiaha town, near the site of Chattanooga, which DeSoto had visited in 1540. These Pardo expeditions are noteworthy because they built a number of forts in the Indian country, one of which, located at Chiaha, was the first fort known to have been built by white men within the bounds of Tennessee. Although garrisoned for a short period of time, it was then abandoned and later was destroyed by the Indians.¹⁰

Thus the Spanish explorations of the Tennessee country in the 16th century were of very small significance in the state's history, because the Spaniards did not follow up those explorations with actual occupation. Neither DeSoto nor Pardo found any precious metals in Tennessee, and the Spaniards rapidly lost interest in this region. Some trade relations did develop, however, between the Indians in Tennessee and the Spaniards in Florida, by which the natives were supplied with guns and other goods of European manufacture. Therefore, the chief results of the Spanish explorations were the influences on Indian life.

First English and French Explorations—Of much greater significance in the history of Tennessee was the almost simultaneous appearance at the eastern and western extremities of the present state of English and French explorers more than a hundred years after Pardo's visits to Chiaha. Until recently historians believed that the next white visitors to Tennessee were Frenchmen—the Marquette-Jolliet expedition, which came down the Mississippi River in 1673—and that Englishmen did not appear on the scene until several years later. In 1912, however, there was published a long-lost report, recently uncovered in London, of an expedition from the colony of Virginia which apparently came into East Tennessee during the same year, 1673.¹¹ Two years earlier another expedition, which started at the same trading post, Fort Henry at the Falls of the Appomattox (Petersburg, Virginia), had crossed the Blue Ridge and penetrated to the banks of the New River at the site of Radford, Virginia. This group of explorers, led by Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam, was looking for the "westward flowing waters" about which Indians had told them, and they succeeded, for the New River eventually finds its way to the Ohio. On September 17, 1671, they fired guns, marked some trees, and proclaimed the ownership of the newly-discovered land by "Charles the Second, by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland . . . and Virginia and of all the Territories thereunto belonging. . . ."¹²

The Fort Henry trader who sent out these two expeditions was Abraham Wood. As leader of the one dispatched in the spring of 1673 he selected a gentleman named James Needham, who had just arrived from the recently-established Carolina

settlement at Charleston (Charles Town). With him went Gabriel Arthur, who probably was an indentured servant, and eight Indians.¹³ Soon after passing through the Occaneechi villages of the Piedmont region of Virginia they encountered a party of Tomahittan Indians, who lived beyond the mountains. These Indians were induced to guide them across the mountains to their towns. Most writers¹⁴ have identified the Tomahittans as Overhill Cherokee on the Little Tennessee River in East Tennessee, but recent archaeological investigations have indicated that it is more probable that they were Yuchi Indians living along the Hiwassee, where it is known they resided until about 1714, when they were driven out by the Cherokee.¹⁵

Needham and Arthur learned that these Indians had developed trade relations with the Spaniards in Florida, whom they described as "white people which have long beardes and whiskers and weares clothing." From them they had obtained about sixty guns and many brass pots and kettles. These trade relations had been interrupted, however, when the Spaniards had captured and enslaved several of their tribe. Therefore, they were interested in the possibility of trading directly with the English. Needham was induced to take several of the Indians back to Fort Henry with him, leaving Arthur to stay with the Tomahittans until his return. They were entertained by Abraham Wood at Fort Henry, but on the return journey Needham was killed by his Occaneechi guide, called Indian John, who ripped open his body and cut out his heart, and then commanded the Tomahittans to hasten home and kill the other Englishman. His aim and that of his tribe appears to have been to prevent the establishment of direct trade relations between the Virginians and Western Indians in order that the Occaneechi might continue to serve as a middleman between them.¹⁶

When the Tomahittans returned home they attempted to carry out Indian John's instructions and were about to burn Gabriel Arthur at the stake, but the leading chieftain intervened and saved his life. Arthur then remained with these Indians for nearly a year and accompanied them on several war and hunting expeditions, including a raid against the Spaniards in Florida. There was also a raid against an Indian town near the English settlement at Port Royal, South Carolina, which Arthur refused to join until assured that any whites found in the town would be spared. On another expedition into what appears to have been the Kentucky country, Arthur was captured by a party of Shawnee Indians. They were about to kill him but decided to wash the paint off his body first. Discovering that he was white instead of red, they spared his life. He later escaped and made his way back to the Tomahittan Towns, and eventually was able to return to Fort Henry, accompanied by some of these Indians, in May, 1674. Following these first visits to Indian towns west of the mountains, the Virginians developed trade relations not only with the Tomahittan (or Yuchi) Indians but also with the Overhill Cherokee in East Tennessee. In due time, however, the Virginians were to be outstripped by the more advantageously located traders from Charleston, South Carolina.¹⁷

One year after the English had established their first permanent settlement on

the mainland of North America at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, the French founded the colony of Quebec near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. During the next few decades they discovered in that river and the Great Lakes an easy path to the interior. In 1671, the same year that the English Batts-Fallam expedition reached a branch of the Mississippi River system at Radford, Virginia, and laid claim to the country on behalf of King Charles II, a Frenchman by the name of Daumont Saint-Lusson stood at Sault Ste. Marie, between Lake Huron and Lake Superior, and proclaimed the ownership of the interior of the continent by King Louis XIV of France.

Two years later a Jesuit missionary, Father Jacques Marquette, and a Quebec fur trader, Louis Jolliet, having heard from Indians about a "great river," crossed over from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi. They floated down to the mouth of the Arkansas, visiting en route an Indian town at one of the Chickasaw Bluffs, probably the site of Memphis, by coincidence at about the same time that Needham and Arthur were getting their first view of Tennessee soil at the eastern extremity of the state. They discovered that these Indians,* and also the Chickasaw, had been trading with the Spaniards in Florida and had obtained guns and many other articles of European origin. On their return journey the French voyagers stopped again at the same town, and Father Marquette wrote a letter, dated August 4, 1673, giving the location as "at latitude 35 degrees," which is approximately the latitude of Memphis. This letter, intended for the Spaniards in Florida, found its way into the hands of William Byrd of Virginia.¹⁸

In 1682 a remarkable French empire builder, Robert Cavelier de la Salle, led an expedition which continued all the way down the Mississippi to its mouth, where he proclaimed ownership by the French monarch. On the way down they stopped at what seems to have been the first Chickasaw Bluff, near the mouth of the Hatchie River. One of the youngest members of the party, Pierre Prud'homme, accompanied by an Indian, went hunting, determined as he expressed it, "to make a name for myself." He succeeded in an unusual way. He became lost, and LaSalle had a fort built at the bluff for protection against the Indians while search parties looked for the absent comrade. The fort was called "Prud'homme"—a name which appeared on maps of the Mississippi River for many years.** Several days later Pierre was found farther down the river floating on a raft, and the expedition resumed its journey to the Gulf of Mexico. On the return journey to Canada another stop was made at Fort Prud'homme, and a large part of the expedition remained there for more than a month because of the serious illness of the commander, LaSalle.¹⁹

LaSalle was spared for a more bitter fate. While on a second expedition he was

* Marquette's narrative does not identify these Indians, but on his map, at that approximate location, is an Indian town of Monsoupeleas. It has therefore been surmised that the Indian tribe of that name was allowed by the Chickasaw to live in their country for a short period of time. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 44n.

** The bluff was known as Ecores Prud'homme.

killed in 1687 by his own men in eastern Texas. The faithful remnant of his force, led by Henri Joutel and LaSalle's brother, Abbe Jean Cavelier, returned to Canada mostly on foot. As recounted by one of the party they went

through the same places which the Sieur de la Salle had previously passed when he made his first discovery . . . except that we went to the Sicachas [Chickasaws], where he had not been. The principal village is twenty-five leagues east of the Arkansas. This nation is very numerous; they count at least four thousand warriors; have abundance of every kind of peltry.²⁰

The next Frenchman to visit the Tennessee country, of whom there is record, was Martin Chartier, who presumably deserted LaSalle when he was building Ft. Crevecoeur on the Illinois River in 1680. At that time he married a Shawnee woman, and several years later, about 1689, he accompanied her and others of her people to the Shawnee towns on the Cumberland River near the site of Nashville. He remained there about three years until in 1692 he led a party of Shawnee eastward, eventually reaching Pennsylvania, where he established a trading post on Chartier's Creek.²¹

Not long after Chartier left the Cumberland Valley, certainly before 1696, another, more noted French renegade, Jean Couture, penetrated eastward from the Mississippi all the way to the English settlement at Charleston, presumably following the Tennessee River. He was one of the many French *coureur de bois*, or fur traders, who deserted because of the meticulous French trade regulations and took their furs to the English for sale. In addition to selling his beaver skins in Charleston, however, Couture also encouraged the English to expand their trading and colonizing activities into the region west of the mountains as a means of forestalling the projects of his own fellow countrymen. In 1700 he guided a party of English traders along the same route to the Mississippi to establish an English claim to that region and to direct its Indian trade to Carolina. He seems to have been only one of many French traders who found their way to Charleston, for a French map published in 1701 marks the Tennessee River as the road of the French to Carolina.²²

Couture's visit stimulated the activities of the Carolina traders among the Southern Indians, especially the Chickasaw, where Thomas Welch began operations as early as 1698. Couture and also other French renegades such as Father Louis Hennepin, aroused apprehensions among British officials concerning French designs which in turn led to the consideration of colonization projects, such as those of Dr. Daniel Coxe and others in the Mississippi Valley. Dr. Coxe, a proprietor of the English colony of West Jersey, about 1696 had acquired a sea-to-sea patent, originally granted by Charles I to Sir Robert Heath, to all the land on the American continent between the 31st and 36th parallels. Although in conflict with the earlier grant of "Carolina" by Charles II to eight court favorites in 1663, Coxe planned to establish

a colony of "Carolana" on the Mississippi River to be populated by French Huguenots.

This plan was doomed to failure, but it served to stimulate the French, under the leadership of Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville, to establish a colony of Louisiana along the Mississippi River and on the Gulf of Mexico. Iberville entered the Mississippi River in March, 1699, and the same year established a trading post at the site of Biloxi, Mississippi. In 1702 Mobile was founded, and in 1718 New Orleans, which soon became the capital of the province. During the same period other trading posts were established north of the Ohio River in the Illinois country at Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and elsewhere.²³ Meanwhile, the French were establishing trading posts in the interior among the Southern Indians. One of them, a temporary post (1710-1714), was located among the Shawnee Indians at "French Lick," the site of Nashville, Tennessee. The name of the French trader who established this post is unknown; but he had a youthful assistant named Jean du Charleville, who described his experiences to James Robertson many years later, at Kaskaskia, in the Illinois country. The old trader, he said, had been killed by the Chickasaw Indians when the Shawnee were driven out of the Nashville region in 1714.²⁴

More important in Tennessee history was a trading post, Fort Toulouse, established in 1714 by the French at the fork of the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers—the site of Montgomery, Alabama. This was among the Alabama Indians, loosely affiliated with the Creek Confederacy, and enabled the French to consolidate their influence with the Creeks and also to infiltrate the Cherokee, to the considerable handicap of the Carolina traders. From that date, according to Coxe, English influence in the West began to decline. Not only did the British authorities in London allow the Coxe "Carolana" project to die on the vine, but also English cartographers allowed themselves to be duped into copying French maps which purposely distorted geography to advance the French claim. The Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, after the expulsion of the Shawnee from the latter, were in Cherokee and Chickasaw country—nations which adhered to the English rather than the French. Therefore, they were deprived on these maps of their big bends southward and represented as flowing almost directly into the Ohio. On the other hand, the rivers flowing into the Gulf at the French post of Mobile were greatly lengthened in extent and shown as rising far up in Kentucky. An early example of English copying was the Moll map of 1715 which even showed with heavy lines the boundaries of French Louisiana, portrayed as extending as far east as the Blue Ridge Mountains and as far north as the Ohio River. There was also printed across it: "Louisiana to French."* There is also

* Reproduced in Williams, *Dawn*, opposite p. 62. This acceptance of the French claim, however, may have been with malice aforethought; the map was based on a slightly earlier one drawn by Thomas Nairn, a former Indian agent at Charleston who was advocating British military action to drive out the French and establish an English empire in the Old Southwest. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 89-94. His aim probably was to place the situation in the worst possible light, hoping to stimulate the British authorities to action.

a tradition that the present French Broad River, which rises in the Blue Ridge and finally joins the Holston a few miles above Knoxville to form the Tennessee, was given its name by Carolina colonists who wished to distinguish it from another Broad River which flows eastward into the Atlantic. The westward-flowing Broad was called the French Broad because it went across the Unakas into the French country.²⁵

In the long imperial contest which was ultimately to determine whether the flag which would fly over the eastern part of the Mississippi Valley, including Tennessee, would be that of Great Britain or of France, the Indians and the Indian traders played a conspicuous part. As time went on the Indians became increasingly dependent on goods of European manufacture, especially gunpowder, and any serious interruption of their supply would render their very existence precarious. The Indians would tend to favor that European country which was most generous and consistent in providing for their needs. Many individual traders exercised a great amount of influence over the tribes with which they traded and could induce them to favor his country and oppose its rival. On the other hand, a dishonest or vicious trader could create enmity. Thus the traders and the Indians became important pawns in European diplomacy.

Within most of the Southern Indian nations there existed one faction which favored the British and another which favored the French. In general, however, the French were able to exercise a dominating influence among the Creeks and the Choctaw, while the British usually held sway over the Cherokee and the Chickasaw. But each European power and its traders continued to try to break the other's monopoly. The result was lack of harmony within each tribe, and there were also frequent wars among the tribes, with one European power inciting and supplying one Indian nation, and the other power its opponent. An outstanding example was the frequent warfare between the Choctaw and the Chickasaw, which involved a design on the part of the French to destroy the pro-British owners of the West Tennessee region.

The Indian Trade with the Overhill Cherokee—Very important for Tennessee history was the Europeans' trade with the Cherokee Indians, especially of the Overhill country. After the Creeks, the Yuchi, and the Shawnee had been expelled, the Overhill Cherokee were the only Indians whose towns were located on Tennessee soil. As mentioned earlier, after the visit of Needham and Arthur to East Tennessee in 1673, the Virginians developed a direct trade with the Cherokee as well as the Yuchi. The traders usually followed the "Occaneechi path" (facilitated by the crushing of those Indians by Nathaniel Bacon in 1676) to the Catawba country, near the present boundary between North and South Carolina, and then westward to the Cherokee, or around through northwestern Georgia. The Carolinians, however, considered the Virginians trespassers on the land granted by the royal charters of 1663 and 1665 and used various measures to force them to desist. Despite protective



(Courtesy Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., from "The British Empire Before the American Revolution," ed. by Lawrence Henry Gipson [Zones of International Friction].)

The Cherokee Towns in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century

(A Portion of "A Map of the British and French Dominions in North America," by Dr. John Mitchell, 1755.)

efforts on the part of the British government, the Virginians were gradually forced out and the Charleston traders were left in control of the trade. About 1740 a shorter and easier route from Virginia to the Overhill Cherokee by way of the Holston Valley was discovered, and renewed but sporadic efforts were made by the Virginians to recover the trade, but without much success.²⁶

When the first of the Carolina traders appeared in the Overhill country is uncertain, but it is probable that the trade began about 1690. That is the date given by Tennessee's first historian, John Haywood, for the arrival of Cornelius Doherty, but according to Doherty's own affidavit, he did not enter the Cherokee country until 1719.²⁷ However, the reference by the Frenchman, Henri de Tonti, made in 1694, to Carolinians residing on an upper branch of the Ohio, probably was to Charleston traders in the Overhill country.²⁸ The first of whom we have record were Eleazar Wigan and Alexander Long, who were convicted in 1711 at Charleston of having instigated a raid by the Overhill Cherokee upon the Euchee (Yuchi) in order to obtain "a fine parcel of slaves." Their licenses were withdrawn and they both fled to the Overhill country. By 1715 Wigan (sometimes spelled Wiggan) was again in good standing; but a year earlier Long seems to have been responsible for another Cherokee raid on the Yuchi town of Chestowee, on the Hiwassee River. The warriors of the town murdered the other inhabitants and then committed suicide, to prevent their being taken as slaves. It was this incident which led the Yuchi to depart from East Tennessee.²⁹

The Indian trade was carried on largely on the basis of credit. The Charleston merchants bought their trade goods from merchants in England on credit, and in turn sold them to the traders with the expectation of being repaid with the skins and furs which the traders obtained from the Indians. These would be shipped to England to settle the Charleston merchants' accounts with English suppliers. During the early period of the trade the Indians sold to the traders not only the furs and skins they had acquired on their hunts but also Indians of other tribes whom they had captured in war. These were sold as slaves in Charleston, most of them then being sent to the New England colonies or to the West Indies. As slaves, however, Indians were considered less desirable than Negroes, and as the enslavement of the natives injured Indian relations, the practice was legislated against and gradually died out.³⁰

The leading commodity in the Southern trade was deerskins. From 1699 to 1715 the average number exported from Charleston was 54,000 skins; by 1748 the number had increased to approximately 160,000.* Another estimate is that during the twenty years from 1739 to 1759 an average of 200,000 pounds of deerskins was exported, which would mean that during that period the hides were taken from at least a million and a quarter deer to supply the Carolina trade—a tremendous slaughter, analogous to what occurred later to the buffalo on the western plains. That the

* In 1748 the value of beaver skins exported was given as £300 in contrast to £250,000 for deerskins. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 10.

deer were not exterminated was due probably to the fact that the long cane on the ranges gave them considerable protection. Nevertheless, the Cherokee complained in 1751 to the Virginians that many of the Indians had been obliged to move far to the north in search of fresh hunting grounds.³¹

In exchange for the skins the traders supplied a varied list of commodities. Included was clothing of all kinds, especially blankets, which constituted the Indians' "dress suit" for all ceremonial occasions, white and checked shirts, laced hats, petticoats, colored stockings (red and blue preferred), striped calico, ribbons, and buttons. There were also many articles for use in connection with personal adornment, such as beads, bracelets, ear bobs, vermilion, and looking glasses. These were largely for the men, especially the mirrors. A warrior's costume was not complete without a looking glass slung by a rawhide string over his shoulder. The numerous implements for domestic economy or war included kettles, hoes, axes, scissors, knives, hatchets, guns, gun flints, gunpowder, and bullets. The rates of exchange varied from time to time. At the beginning of organized trade, in 1717, a schedule agreed upon between the Carolina board of commissioners and a chieftain of the Lower Cherokee provided that a gun could be purchased for thirty-five deerskins, a duffle blanket for sixteen, a laced broadcloth coat for thirty, and a calico petticoat for fourteen. For five skins an Indian could acquire a broad hoe or a shirt, and for eight a yard of strouds cloth; for one he could get thirty bullets, a knife and a string of beads, a pair of scissors, or twelve flints. Liquor was also sold in spite of regulations to the contrary, usually for so many mouthfuls of rum for a buckskin. The customary practice was for the buyer to select a man with a large mouth to do the measuring and to watch him carefully to see that he didn't swallow any of the precious liquid. The Indians, like children at Christmas time, always expected presents. This was particularly true of the chiefs. Thus the traders had something equivalent to advertising expenses to take into account. Frequently, however, the colonial government financed the giving of presents.³²

Regulation of the Indian trade out of Charleston began with an act of the Carolina assembly of 1707, which was designed among other purposes to handicap the activities of Virginia traders. Every trader was required to have a license issued by a specially-created board of Indian commissioners. In addition to paying £8 for the license he was required to give a bond of £100 to observe certain regulations. He was especially enjoined against supplying the Indians with spirituous liquors, and he was not to seize any free Indian and sell him as a slave, obtain skins or other goods by threats or abuse, or supply ammunition to any hostile Indian. In 1716 the trade became a public monopoly, but since this did not prove as profitable as anticipated, the private trading system was restored in 1721, two years after South Carolina became in effect a royal colony. At the same time James Moore was appointed as one of three Indian commissioners to enforce colonial regulations. After Moore's death in 1724 George Chicken became sole commissioner. During the regime of one of his successors, William Pinckney, in 1751, the Cherokee

country was divided into nineteen or twenty districts and traders were licensed to operate in certain specified towns. Seven Overhill towns were to compose three districts, with Great Tellico and Chatuge in one, Tenase, Chote, and Toquo in another, and Settico and Tallassee in a third. Robert Gowdy, Anthony Deane, and Samuel Benn were to have charge, respectively, of the three districts. Cornelius Doherty of Euphasee (Hiwassee) and Ludovick Grant of Tomotley were assigned two districts made up of the Valley towns. One of them, Euphasee or Hiwassee, was located on the lower Hiwassee River within what is now East Tennessee and was sometimes considered a part of the Overhill group. Also, Tomotely was soon to be moved to the Little Tennessee River in the Tennessee country.³³

The route usually followed by the traders to the Overhill Cherokee country ran from the Congarees (on the Congaree River at the site of present-day Columbia, South Carolina), where a trading factory was located, by way of Ninety-six* to Keowee in the Lower towns (near the present Pendleton, South Carolina). Continuing westward the trail led across northeastern Georgia to what is now Murphy, North Carolina, and then across the mountain boundary between that state and Tennessee to the Overhill town of Great Tellico at modern Tellico Plains. An alternative route left the main trail some distance west of Keowee at the site of Claxton, Georgia, and went almost due north to the present Franklin, North Carolina, and thence westward, entering Tennessee along the valley of the Little Tennessee River. The journey required from three to four weeks from Charleston. At the height of the trade a packhorse train of fifteen or twenty horses** was required to carry a trader's supply of goods. Usually two or three traders traveled together as a caravan, sometimes including as many as a hundred or more horses.³⁴

During most of the year the trader lived at an Indian village, enjoying comparative comfort, his house standing out imposingly above the Indian structures "like a tower in a city." With his Indian wife and brood of halfbreed children, his vegetable garden, cattle, hogs, and poultry, he became practically a member of the tribe. Often a trader was chosen by one of the Indians as his "particular friend," a fact which was often the means of saving the white man's life during occasional periods of warfare. Some of the children of the white traders later became prominent members of the Indian nations; for example, Alexander McGillivray, the son of a Scotch trader named Lachlan McGillivray and a half-breed girl, became during the period following the American Revolution the most noted leader of the Creek Confederacy.

The relations of the traders with the creditor merchants in Charleston were not always pleasant. If the trader returned with a sufficient number of skins to enable him to pay off his debt to the merchant, he would have no difficulty in obtaining

* So called because it was ninety-six miles east of Keowee, the chief town of the Lower Cherokee.

** Usually Indian-bred or raised by traders in the Indian country. When Indian affairs were in an unsettled state, it was sometimes considered too risky to send horses, and Indian burdeners were used instead.

credit for another season's supply of goods. Frequently, however, he would not have enough peltry to take care of his obligations; and if he became too deeply involved in debt he was in danger of confinement in a debtor's prison. Fearful of such a fate many indebted traders were forced to remain for several years in the Indian country, unless they were able to obtain from the colonial government "protections" which would enable them to come to Charleston and make satisfactory arrangements with their creditors. Such "protections" were frequently granted, not merely because of the expectation that the large profits usually available in the Indian trade would soon enable the trader to re-establish his credit, but also because of the realization that the services of the trader in the Indian country were of immense diplomatic value to the colony, itself. The trader when petitioning for a "protection" did not hesitate to recount his services in this regard, but the activities of many of the traders could not be considered as "services." A dishonest trader, who regularly cheated the Indians and occasionally became involved in brawls with them, could do irreparable injury to the English cause. Despite meticulous regulations enacted by the colonial assemblies, even including the supplying of iron yardsticks, which could not be broken—but which were easily misplaced—many instances of Indian dissatisfaction with the conduct of the English traders developed.³⁵

Anglo-French Rivalry—The diplomatic activity of the Charleston traders in the Cherokee country was of especial importance to the colony of South Carolina, in view of the strategic position occupied by this tribe during periods of warfare between the English and the French. As the South Carolina assembly once declared, "The safety of this Province does, under God, depend on the friendship of the Cherokees." Because of the ease with which South Carolina could be attacked from the rear by the French and the French-controlled Indians through the Cherokee country, that region became known as the "Key to Carolina." In 1725 the South Carolina government sent Colonel George Chicken to the Cherokee towns, including those in the Overhill country, in an effort to make sure of their continued loyalty to the English. Although the Indians assured Chicken that they had no love for the French and would not allow any Frenchmen to come among them, there soon appeared evidences that some of the Overhill Cherokee were inclined to look with favor upon the French. The trader Eleazar Wigan was employed by the government to counteract this tendency, but his work was not completely successful.³⁶

In 1729, however, there appeared in South Carolina a man who, apparently on his own initiative, did yeoman service in cementing the allegiance of the Cherokee Indians to the English. This was Sir Alexander Cuming,³⁷ a remarkable man of many fantastic schemes. After setting up a loan office in Charleston, in the conduct of which he does not appear to have been strictly honest,* he visited the Cherokee

* After he had returned to England, "one of his bills came back protested . . . His Treasury being broke open, nothing was found in it but some Empty boxes, old Iron and other Rubbish." Quoted in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 118.

Indians, apparently for the purpose of collecting specimens of minerals, rocks, and other natural products of the region. Learning of the activities of the French agents among these Indians, he determined to win their unalterable allegiance to the British crown. According to his own report, supported by the testimony of traders who were witnesses, he entered an assemblage of warriors in the town-house at Keowee, one of the Lower towns of the Cherokee, fully armed, which was a serious violation of Cherokee custom and which caused consternation among the whites who accompanied him. Tremendously impressed, however, the Indians obeyed his orders "to acknowledge his Majesty King George's Sovereignty over them on their Knee," a submission which, Sir Alexander boasted, "they never before made either to God or man." Later he met with delegations from all of the Cherokee towns at Nequassee, where he designated one of their number, Moytoy of Great Tellico, as emperor of the nation and obtained the submission of the whole tribe to the British king.

Of even greater importance was his decision to take several of the Indians to London with him. Among the six young braves* chosen for this journey was Attakullakulla, the Little Carpenter, who was destined to become the chief diplomat of the Cherokee Indians and in this capacity a powerful force in maintaining the friendship of this tribe with the English. While in England the young Indians were presented to King George II and entertained at the expense of the government, and the Little Carpenter never forgot his experiences on this journey. He hoped until the end of his days that he might have another opportunity to visit the "great white chief" across the waters. Before leaving London the six Cherokees, as deputies of their nation, on September 30, 1730, signed a treaty with the British government. It declared that "the Chain of Friendship" between the King of England and the Cherokee Indians "is like the Sun, which shines here and also upon the great mountains where they live, and equally warms the Hearts of the Indians and of the English." The Indians agreed that their people were "now the children of the King of Great Britain, and he their Father," and that they "must treat the English as Brethren of the same Family, and must be always ready, at the Governor's command, to fight against any nation, whether they be White Men or Indians, who shall dare to molest or hurt the English." An important provision of the treaty, which later was the cause of some ill feeling, declared that

if by any accidental Misfortune it should happen, that an Englishman should kill an Indian, the King or Great Man of the Cherrokees shall first complain to the English Governor, and the Man who did it shall be punish'd by the English Laws, as if he had kill'd an Englishman; and in the like Manner, if an Indian kills an Englishman, the Indian who did it shall be deliver'd up to the

* Only two were chiefs. A seventh was added near Charleston, but since he had no credentials he did not sign the treaty negotiated in London. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 279-80.

Governor, and be punish'd by the same English Law as if he were an Englishman.³⁸

Although Cuming did not return to America with the Indians—he spent much of the remainder of his life in a debtor's prison—his work was an important factor in strengthening British influence among the Cherokee. This influence has been exaggerated by some writers³⁹ who claim that for many years these Indians maintained in general an increasing attitude of hostility toward the French. Actually, the English had serious difficulties with the Cherokee within the next three or four years.⁴⁰ The Cherokee, however, frequently sent out raiding parties against the French which brought back booty, scalps, and also prisoners. These French prisoners, according to Cherokee custom, were usually purchased from their captors and adopted into the tribe. In this position they were able to counteract the influence of the British traders by arguing in favor of the French cause. One of these Frenchmen, Antoine Bonnefoy, who was captured along the Ohio River in 1741, escaped the next year and managed to find his way to the French Fort Toulouse, located near the site of Montgomery, Alabama. A journal of his experiences, kept by Bonnefoy, provides much information concerning the Cherokee attitude toward the English and the French, and also is one of the sources of information concerning a German Utopian socialist, Christian Gottlieb Priber, who was residing at the Overhill Cherokee town of Great Tellico while Bonnefoy was a captive there.⁴¹

Priber was considered by the English to be a French agent, but the leading authorities on the question are of the opinion that he had no connections with the French government, but was working quite independently.⁴² He was a well educated native of Saxony, who was forced because of his communistic ideas to flee to England, and from there to South Carolina; from that colony he went to the Overhill Cherokee, among whom he lived for about seven years. According to the report of the English trader and author, James Adair, he exchanged all his possessions with the head warriors and thus made friends with them, and he “ate, drank, slept, danced, dressed and painted himself with the Indians, so that it was not easy to distinguish him from the natives.” He quickly learned their language, and “by gradual advances impressed them with a very ill opinion of the English, representing them as a fraudulent, avaritious [*sic*], and encroaching people: he at the same time, inflated the artless savages, with a prodigious high opinion of their own importance in the American scale of power.”⁴³ Using this psychological approach he attempted to achieve his chief aim: to introduce his communistic ideas among the Indians by creating a “Kingdom of Paradise,” which strangely enough he also called a republic. Ludovick Grant, the English trader, described the system as proposing “that all things should be in common amongst them; that even their wives should be so and that the Children should be looked upon as the Children of the Public and be taken care of as such and not by their natural parents . . . and that they should admit into their society Creeks and Catawbias, French, and English, all colours and com-

plexions; in short all who were of these principles, which were truly such as had no principles at all."⁴⁴

Bonnefoy also described the plan and recorded that Priber offered to include him and the other French prisoners in his republic. He made no mention, however, of the existence of any impression that Priber was an agent of the French.* Nevertheless, the English were convinced that he was an emissary of the French and were determined to get him out of the Cherokee Nation. The Carolina government ordered Ludovick Grant to arrest him, but when he attempted it Priber laughed at him insolently and indicated that the Indians would not permit it. When another South Carolina agent, Col. Joseph Fox, actually did attempt to seize him, he escaped with his life only because Priber himself intervened to save him. Later, however, while on his way to Mobile, Priber was seized by English traders among the Creeks and taken to Georgia, where he was imprisoned for the remainder of his life. Unfortunately, a mass of manuscripts, including a book he had written and a Cherokee alphabet, were apparently destroyed. Even after Priber's removal, his influence at the Indian town of Great Tellico remained strong. The warriors at that town for many years adopted an attitude quite hostile to the English.⁴⁵

The imperial rivalry of the English and the French manifested itself not only in regard to the Cherokee Indians in the southern Appalachians, but also among the Chickasaw, who lived just east of the Mississippi and claimed the whole of the present-day West Tennessee. As already mentioned, English traders had begun operations among these Indians before the end of the seventeenth century. The French realized that the English influence upon the Chickasaw and other Mississippi tribes constituted a serious danger to their imperial plans, particularly since it endangered communication along the Mississippi River between the French trading posts on the Gulf of Mexico and the settlements in the Illinois country and in Canada. A signal triumph of French diplomacy was the effecting of an alliance with the Choctaw Indians in south-central Mississippi, but the Chickasaw, incited by English traders, engaged in almost constant warfare with the Choctaw tribe. The French attempted, with only temporary success, to mediate between these two Indian nations and to lure the Chickasaw from their adherence to the English. The Chickasaw, however, in 1705, resumed their warfare with the Choctaw and the French, and from that time on remained staunch friends of the English. They offered refuge to the survivors of the Natchez tribe which had been almost destroyed by the French, and they frequently ambushed French boats on the Mississippi River.

* Actually, Priber told the Indians to consider both the English and the French "as interlopers." But since the English had a near monopoly of their trade, the Cherokee would do well to play off the French against them. Crane, "Lost Utopia," 56. This author (p. 58) thinks his chief aim was to create a communistic federation of all the Southern Indians as "a model for a republic which might later be set up in France."



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Looking North, with Fort Loudoun Lake in Foreground

Unable to win the friendship of the Chickasaw, the French adopted the policy of destruction, first by inciting the Choctaw against them, and then by force of French arms. So serious was the danger to the Chickasaw that the Cherokee offered to provide them a haven in their country. The Chickasaw, however, courageously determined to hold on to the land they possessed, and in 1736 this warlike tribe succeeded in defeating two French expeditions sent against them, one from the north and the other from the south, commanded by Major Pierre d'Artaquette and Governor Jean Baptiste de Bienville of Louisiana, respectively. Three years later Bienville organized another campaign against the Chickasaw, marshalling an army of 3,600 Frenchmen and Indians at the site of Memphis, where Fort Assumption was built as a base of operations. The Chickasaw, realizing that their few hundred warriors were no match for such a large force, even though they did defeat an advance guard of the expedition, agreed to sue for peace.

Although the French army had already been disbanded, the Chickasaw on March 31, 1740, agreed to Bienville's harsh terms. They handed over the few Natchez refugees still in their hands, but more important, they promised not to disturb French boats on the Mississippi. In exchange, the French agreed to stop the war and to discourage the Northern Indians from attacking the Chickasaw; but Bienville refused to include the Choctaw in the agreement. He made it clear that the French would continue to pay the Choctaw for Chickasaw scalps and supply them with arms and ammunition. Future Choctaw raids so weakened the Chickasaw that they no longer remained a serious challenge to French control of the Mississippi River. There were a few sporadic raids, but no French convoy on the river was attacked between 1740 and 1751. The French lost some prestige by failing to crush the Chickasaw, but in the long run Bienville's policy was relatively successful. The annoying Chickasaw thorn in the side of French imperialism was sufficiently blunted to render it largely ineffective.⁴⁶

CHAPTER III—NOTES

1. Zella Armstrong has conveniently brought together practically all the evidence that could be found to substantiate the Madoc story, including the rumors concerning "Welsh Indians" as presumed descendants of the Welsh voyagers, in *Who Discovered America? The Amazing Story of Madoc* (Chattanooga, 1950). For an early (1823) description of the old stone fort near Manchester, Tennessee, which Miss Armstrong believes was built by the Welsh, see Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History* (1959 ed.), 158-60. More critically written is the work of the Welsh historian, David Williams, "John Evans' Strange Journey," *American Historical Review*, LIV (January-April, 1949), 277-95, 508-29, which discredits the whole story as a myth.
2. Armstrong, *Who Discovered America?*, 169-70.
3. Williams, "John Evans' Strange Journey," 527.
4. 76 Cong., 1 sess., *House Document* No. 71.

5. *Ibid.*, 202; Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country* (New York, 1952), 18-20.
6. Thomas M. N. Lewis and Madeline Kneberg of the University of Tennessee Department of Anthropology. Miss Kneberg, who has made an extensive study of both the DeSoto and Pardo routes into East Tennessee, differs with the Commission report in regard to the location of a number of other key points.
7. *House Doc.* No. 71, pp. 190-91.
8. *Ibid.*, 226-57.
9. Philip Phillips, James A. Ford, and James B. Griffin, *Archaeological Survey in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, 1940-1947*, *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Harvard University (Cambridge, 1951), 391. The most complete statement of the arguments in favor of Memphis is in Malone, *Chickasaw Nation*, 52-169. There have been some recent archaeological excavations in the Memphis area, but their results have not been carefully analyzed.
10. John R. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, *Bulletin* No. 137 of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1946), 64-66, 205.
11. Charles W. Alvord and Lee Bidgood, *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1659-1674* (Cleveland, 1912), 209-27.
12. *Ibid.*, 191.
13. *Ibid.*, 79.
14. *Ibid.*, 81; Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 24n; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 14; Malone, *Cherokees*, 5; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 53; John A. Caruso, *The Appalachian Frontier* (Indianapolis and New York, 1959), 18-19.
15. Lewis and Kneberg, *Tribes that Slumber*, 140-41. See also Swanton, *Indians of Southeastern U. S.*, 213-14.
16. Alvord and Bidgood, *First Explorations*, 79-85, 210-18.
17. *Ibid.*, 218-26; W. Neil Franklin, "Virginia and the Cherokee Indian Trade, 1673-1752," E. T. H. S., *Publications*, No. 4 (1932), 3-21.
18. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 15-16; Samuel C. Williams, *The Dawn of the Tennessee Valley and Tennessee History* (Johnson City, 1937), 13-14; Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 41-45.
19. *Ibid.*, 49-55; Williams, *Dawn*, 14-17; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 16-17. Earlier writers mistakenly believed that Fort Prud'homme was located at the fourth Chickasaw Bluff, the site of Memphis. James Phelan, *History of Tennessee* (Boston and New York, 1888), 313; J. M. Keating, *History of Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee* (3 vols. in one, Syracuse, N. Y., 1888), I, 26-28. Judge J. P. Young, "Fort Prud'homme. Was It the First Settlement in Tennessee?" *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (December, 1916), 235, proved the location to be at the first bluff. See also Samuel C. Williams, *The Beginnings of West Tennessee* (Johnson City, Tenn., 1930), 8.
20. *Ibid.*, 9; Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 59-62. See also Henry Folmer, *Franco-Spanish Rivalry in North America, 1524-1763* (Glendale, Cal., 1953), 164-65. In 1699-1700 a party of four French missionaries, led by Father Francis J. de Montigny, came down the Mississippi with the aim of converting the Southern tribes. They stopped at Fort Prud'homme and also experienced one of West Tennessee's earthquakes. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 65-69.
21. Williams, *Dawn*, 17-20. Cf. Vernon W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier* (Durham, N. C., 1928), 60, who identified this Frenchman as Jean Couture.
22. *Ibid.*, 42-45. Professor Crane has described Couture's career in more detail in

- "The Tennessee River as the Road to Carolina," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, III (March, 1916), 3-18.
23. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 46-70, *et passim*; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 84-87, 123-25; Williams, *Dawn*, 28-31.
 24. *Ibid.*, 75-77; Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History* (1959 ed.), 207-08, 422, c.
 25. Williams, *Dawn*, 73-74, 40-41; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 87, 99. Wilma Dykeman, *The French Broad* (New York, 1955), 16. Berlen C. Moneymaker, Chief of the Geology Division, TVA, Knoxville, has an interesting collection of early maps of Southeastern United States, in which the distortions mentioned are very clearly indicated. Some reproductions are in Swanton, *Creek Indians*, pocket. See also William Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps* (Princeton, 1958).
 26. Franklin, "Virginia and the Cherokee Indian Trade, 1673-1752," 3-21. Good accounts of the trade from Charleston are: Mary U. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders among the Overhill Cherokees, 1690-1760," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 3-26; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 19-29; Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 64-93; Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 108-61; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 52-66. A good account by one of the traders is Adair, *American Indians*. Another contemporary source is Bartram, *Travels*.
 27. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 6, 6n.
 28. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 94.
 29. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 12n.; Lewis and Kneberg, *Tribes that Slumber*, 142-44.
 30. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 109-14, 179n.
 31. *Ibid.*, 111-12; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 53-54.
 32. *Ibid.*, 54-55, 63-65; Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 13-14.
 33. *Ibid.*, 6, 16-17; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 56-60, and Mitchell map, reproduced opposite p. 52, which should be compared with the map in Williams (ed.), *Memoirs of Timberlake*, opposite p. 29. Reproductions of these maps, including a modern counterpart of the latter, are on pages 51, 72-73 of this *History*.
 34. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 7, 14; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 19; Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 127-31. See also map in Paul Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun* (Venore, Tenn., 1958), 10.
 35. Rothrock, "Carolina Traders," 16-17.
 36. *Ibid.*, 8-9; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 21-22. The Journal of George Chicken is printed in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 93-104.
 37. Cuming's journal, with an excellent introduction, is printed in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 115-43. For other accounts see Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 22-24; Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 277-80, 295-302; Williams, *Dawn*, 88-93.
 38. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 138-41.
 39. John A. Doyle, *English Colonies in America* (5 vols., New York, 1889-1907), V, 299; Herbert L. Osgood, *The English Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (4 vols., New York, 1924-1925), II, 233. According to the former, the founding of Georgia would not have been possible without the 1730 treaty.
 40. Williams, *Early Travels*, 147; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 61. According to Williams, in *Dawn*, 93-94, the chief result of Cuming's work was the impression made on the Little Carpenter by his visit to London. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 294-302, credits the publicity given to the Indians' visit with stimulating interest in England in the Carolina frontier and contributing to the founding of the colony of Georgia.
 41. Bonnefoy's journal is printed in Williams, *Early Travels*, 147-62.
 42. The leading accounts are Vernon W. Crane, "A Lost Utopia of the First American

Frontier," *Sewanee Review*, XXVII (January, 1919), 48-61; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 25-27; Williams, *Dawn*, 101-13; Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 61-62. Crane suggests that since Priber was in England at the time of the 1730 treaty with the Cherokee, he may have decided at that time to use those Indians in his communistic experiment.

43. *American Indians*, xx.

44. Quoted in Williams, *Dawn*, 103.

45. *Ibid.*, 104-05, 110; Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 147-62; Crane, "Lost Utopia," 56-57.

46. The best account is Dawson A. Phelps, "The Chickasaw, the English, and the French, 1699-1744," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (June, 1957), 117-33. See also Norman W. Caldwell, "The Chickasaw Threat to French Control of the Mississippi," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, XVI (December, 1938), 465-92. Less inclined to admit French success are Williams, *West Tennessee*, 20-31; and *Dawn*, 96-100; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 28-29; Malone, *Chickasaw Nation*, 232-76.

CHAPTER IV

Fort Loudoun and The Cherokee War

THE NEED FOR THE FORT—The struggle between the English and the French for control of the Indian tribes of the Old Southwest was but a part of the long contest between those two nations for possession of a large part of the North American continent. By the outcome was to be determined whether the eastern part of the Mississippi Valley, including the present state of Tennessee, was to become English or French in civilization. Between the beginning of the War of the League of Augsburg in 1689 and the Treaty of Paris of 1763 ending the Seven Years' War, the English and the French were involved in at least four distinct periods of warfare, each of which had its counterpart in the wilds of the American continent. Although between these wars there existed periods of peace in Europe, those truces were not observed by the pawns of the Europeans in this contest, the native allies of the English and the French, or by the white traders who struggled for control over them. The last of these wars, and the one which was to result in ultimate victory for the English, was the French and Indian War, which actually began in America in 1754, nearly two years before it developed into the Seven Years' War in Europe. During this war there was built within the bounds of the present Tennessee the most western English fort in America, Fort Loudoun, on the banks of the Little Tennessee River.¹

This historic fort was built in belated response to repeated requests made by the Cherokee Indians, but also as a part of the English policy of forestalling French efforts to lure the Cherokee away from their British allegiance. The original proposal actually was made by the governor of South Carolina, James Glen, when he learned at a conference with the Cherokee at Saluda in 1746 that two French agents had arrived in their country asking permission to build a fort at the Overhill town of Chote. He countered with the suggestion that the English build one for them instead. The Cherokee at first refused; but early the next year, after the pro-British Cherokee had killed one of the French agents, they granted permission.²

Although Anglo-Cherokee relations were frequently strained during the next few years, the Cherokee became increasingly insistent that a fort be constructed in the Overhill country for their protection; and the English delay in keeping their promises to do so contributed to the ill feeling. As allies of the English, the Cherokee were subjected to numerous attacks by the Indian allies of the French, particu-

larly the Shawnee of the Ohio country, with the Overhill Cherokee naturally bearing the brunt of these attacks. Governor Glen repeatedly urged the English authorities, as well as the South Carolina assembly, to make provision for the construction of a fort for their protection. It would not only serve to protect the Indians, he argued, but would also enable them to "carry the War into the Enemys Country," as they would have a place of security in which to leave their women and children. "They pray for it as a favour," he said, "so it would probably fix their friendship for the English at present, but as the Indians are pretty fickle should they ever afterwards meditate mischief, it would enable us immediately to curb their insolencies and prevent things from coming to a head."³ Repeatedly the Cherokee renewed their request, and several times they were promised a fort; but the first fort built by the South Carolinians among them, Fort Prince George, built in 1753, was located opposite the Lower Cherokee town of Keowee, instead of in the Overhill country, as the Indians desired.⁴

Shortly before the French and Indian War began, both the English—the Virginians as well as the South Carolinians—and the French sought the aid of the Cherokee in the anticipated conflict. The Indians rejected the French overtures and sent out raiding parties against them. These were followed by retaliatory raids by the French Indians from the North, which increased Cherokee dissatisfaction because of the English failure to build a fort in the Overhill country for their protection.⁵

The Virginia activities had a close connection with the events which resulted in the beginning of Anglo-French hostilities in the Ohio Valley. In 1749 the Ohio Company of Virginia had obtained a royal grant of a vast tract of land along the Ohio River, and in the next few years it took steps to occupy the country. The French in Canada considered this activity an encroachment on French territory, and in 1753 they sent an army into the region near the Forks of the Ohio to build forts to protect their claims. Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie of Virginia then sent young George Washington, a major in the Virginia militia, to warn the French to withdraw. When they refused, Dinwiddie sent another expedition to assist the Ohio Company in building a fort at the Forks (site of the present Pittsburgh), and he later dispatched Washington with a small force to garrison it. Before the fort was completed and before Washington arrived, a large French army came down the Allegheny River and forced the English to capitulate, on April 17, 1754. The French then completed the fort and named it Fort Duquesne. Thus an "undeclared war" in the American wilderness had begun.⁶

As early as June, 1753, Dinwiddie had made plans for a conference with the Catawba* and Cherokee Indians the following May at Winchester. In February he sent a trader named Abraham Smith to those tribes, and the next month he boasted that they had promised to send 1,000 warriors whenever they were needed. Major

* An Indian tribe of western North Carolina.

Washington expressed his great need for such Indian help, but it failed to materialize, partly due to Governor Glen's contrary advice to the natives. Glen, recalling that the Cherokee had sent two delegations to Virginia in 1751 and 1752 asking for the establishment of direct trade relations, feared that any direct contacts between Dinwiddie and those Indians would threaten South Carolina's near monopoly of the Cherokee trade. Although Dinwiddie sent Abraham Smith back to the Cherokee in July for the promised warriors and also sent the Cherokee emperor, Old Hop, a silver medal, that chieftain declared that since no war supplies had arrived from Virginia he was not going to send any warriors. Instead, he followed Glen's advice and merely sent out a few war parties to the lower Ohio country.⁷

Meanwhile, the British government had at last responded to the South Carolina entreaties and had authorized the building of a fort in the Overhill Cherokee country. By April of 1754 Lord Halifax, president of the Board of Trade, had become convinced of the need; and when, on June 21, Charles Pinckney, the South Carolina agent in London, presented evidence that the French had made proposals to build a fort at Chote, he was able to induce the Board to grant the necessary authority. On July 5 orders went forth to Governor Glen to build a fort in the Overhill country, and to Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia to assist Glen financially by sending him a part of the ten thousand pounds which were being sent to Dinwiddie for the prosecution of the war against the French. Glen asked for £7,000, but Dinwiddie sent only one thousand, an amount which Glen considered woefully inadequate for the purpose.⁸

Considerable delay in the building of the fort was caused by differences of opinion between the governors of Virginia and South Carolina. Not only was Glen dissatisfied with the amount of money he received from Dinwiddie, but he insisted that all negotiations with the Cherokee be carried on through him. He was still fearful that the Virginians might attempt to recover a part of the lucrative Cherokee trade. The two governors also disagreed as to the use to be made of the Cherokee Indians in the war. Dinwiddie wished to have them send a large contingent of at least 400 warriors to participate in the campaign General Edward Braddock was planning to send against Fort Duquesne in the summer of 1755. Glen preferred that the Cherokee fight nearer home, and thus remain as a protection for South Carolina against hostile attack. Dinwiddie charged, with some justification, that Glen viewed the matter from the viewpoint of one colony alone, rather than in the interest of the whole British Empire. It should be pointed out, however, that Glen appears to have had in mind the idea of shifting the center of the war from the North to the South, with an all-out effort being made to drive the French out of Louisiana, for which several forts in the old Southwest would be necessary.

Following the disastrous defeat of Braddock's expedition which Washington and others blamed on the lack of Indian allies, Dinwiddie became violent in his denunciation of Glen. He contended that the failure of the Cherokee to participate in the campaign was due largely to the fact that Glen was at that time holding a

conference with five hundred Cherokee warriors at Saluda, only two hundred miles from Charleston. Thus the efforts of his agent, Nathaniel Gist,* to obtain the services of 400 Cherokee with Braddock had been rendered fruitless.⁹

At the Saluda conference, in June and July, 1755, the Cherokee were again promised a fort in the Overhill country, as well as arms and ammunition, in exchange for the surrender of all their lands to the British crown. It seems that this was more of a reacknowledgment of British sovereignty as against the French than an actual cession of lands,¹⁰ and was in accord with Glen's "grand design" for the Southwest. His plan, however, was not approved in London, and he was soon to be removed from his position. The immediate problem was the building of a fort in the Overhill Cherokee country, but the inability of Glen to raise the necessary funds resulted in further delay. It was not until a delegation of 150 Cherokee, including the Little Carpenter, visited Charleston in December of 1755 and demanded in strong language to know when the work of construction would begin, that South Carolina was stirred to immediate action. Fearing that otherwise the Cherokee would make good their threat to join the French, the assembly of the colony voted a loan of two thousand pounds to the British crown; but, as even modern assemblies sometimes have a tendency to do, it adjourned without levying the tax necessary to raise the money. Patriotic citizens of Charleston, however, subscribed the amount, and Governor Glen began the assembling of an expedition. He contracted for the necessary supplies and sent out an agent to the Cherokee country to select a location for the fort. Early in June, 1756, just as the expedition was about to march, another delay was caused by the sudden replacement of Glen by a new governor of South Carolina, William Henry Lyttelton. Although Lyttelton had been given orders to build a fort, he insisted that the plans already made by his predecessor were unacceptable, and he disbanded the expedition until he could devise his own plans. Captain Raymond Demere, the commander, was sent on with a handful of men to Fort Prince George, where he waited for more than three months for the expedition to be reassembled.¹¹

The Virginia Fort: Cherokee Disaffection—While Demere was waiting at Fort Prince George, an expedition from Virginia under the command of Major Andrew Lewis built a small fort for the Cherokee opposite the town of Chote, which unfortunately many writers have confused with the more important Fort Loudoun, eventually constructed by the South Carolinians. Governor Dinwiddie had renewed his own negotiations with the Cherokee in the spring of 1756, and his

* He later became the father of the noted Sequoyah. While in the Cherokee country in 1755 he became involved in a quarrel with Richard Pearis, who had become estranged from Nathaniel's father, Christopher Gist, as a result of their joint trading operations at the Long Island of the Holston (site of Kingsport, Tennessee). S. C. Williams, "Nathaniel Gist: Father of Sequoyah," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 40-41.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Typical Quarry Scene in Knoxville and Knox County

envoys, William Byrd and Peter Randolph,* met the Indians in a conference at Broad River in North Carolina in March. They delivered a letter from the Governor warning the Cherokee to be on guard against the French:

... their Speeches are made up of falsehoods and unjust Reports, let none of them remain among you, and by no Means allow them to build any Forts on the River Hogohegee [Tennessee] in the upper Cherokee country, for their Intentions are with evil Design against you and your Brothers the English.

To the Virginia request for Cherokee warriors to be used in the projected campaign against Fort Duquesne the Little Carpenter replied:

... unless we have a Fort built for the Protection of our Wives and Children

* They were assisted by two North Carolina commissioners and negotiated also with the Catawba Indians.

in the absence of our Warriors, it will not be safe for us to leave them. We have had frequent Promises from the Governor of South Carolina to build us a Fort; . . . But we do not find that that Governor has yet made the least Preparations toward performing his Engagement. Wherefore, we are sorry to tell you, that we don't much rely on him.

He closed with a threat that "if no Steps are taken for our Security, the French will extinguish the Friendly Fire between us."¹²

In the treaty which was signed on March 17 the Virginians promised to "assist in contributing their Proportion to the building [of] a strong Fort." The Cherokee agreed not to let the French build one in their country and also promised that four hundred Cherokee warriors would be sent to Virginia within forty days after the English fort had been completed. Apparently aware of the organizing of the South Carolina expedition by Governor Glen, Dinwiddie sent Major Lewis with sixty men to assist the South Carolinians in building the fort, but instructed him to leave the garrisoning of the structure to South Carolina, and to return immediately with the four hundred warriors promised by the Cherokee. He informed Glen of his plans but apparently the letter miscarried. When Lewis arrived in the Cherokee country late in June, 1756, and found the South Carolinians were not yet on the scene, he was met by the natural demand from the Cherokee that they be provided with two forts. They asked that the Virginia expedition build them a fort on the north bank of the Little Tennessee River opposite Chote, for defense against attack from the north by land, and that the South Carolinians, when they should arrive, should build them another fort on the south bank a few miles down the river to protect them from enemies coming by water. Lewis reluctantly acquiesced in these demands and built for the Cherokee a small log fort about a hundred feet square, which was never provided with an English garrison or a name. It was located on the north bank of the river about a mile from Chote. As the fort neared completion he called upon the Cherokee to keep their promise to provide four hundred warriors. The Indians, however, began to equivocate, and when Lewis finally left for Virginia in August, 1756, he took with him only seven warriors and three women. He had become extremely suspicious of the Cherokee, and aware that they were in constant communication with the French and their Shawnee allies, and that some of the young Cherokee warriors were bringing in English scalps. He was convinced that the only policy for the English to adopt was to send several hundred men to the Cherokee country "to strike terror to them and force a Compliance & Submission."¹³

One of the factors which appears to have contributed to this Cherokee dissatisfaction was the influence of a Frenchman named Chevalier Louis de Lantagnac. According to his own story, as a boy of thirteen serving as an ensign at Fort Toulouse he had been captured in 1745 by a band of Chickasaw and taken to Georgia. The Georgians turned him over to Governor Glen of South Carolina, who

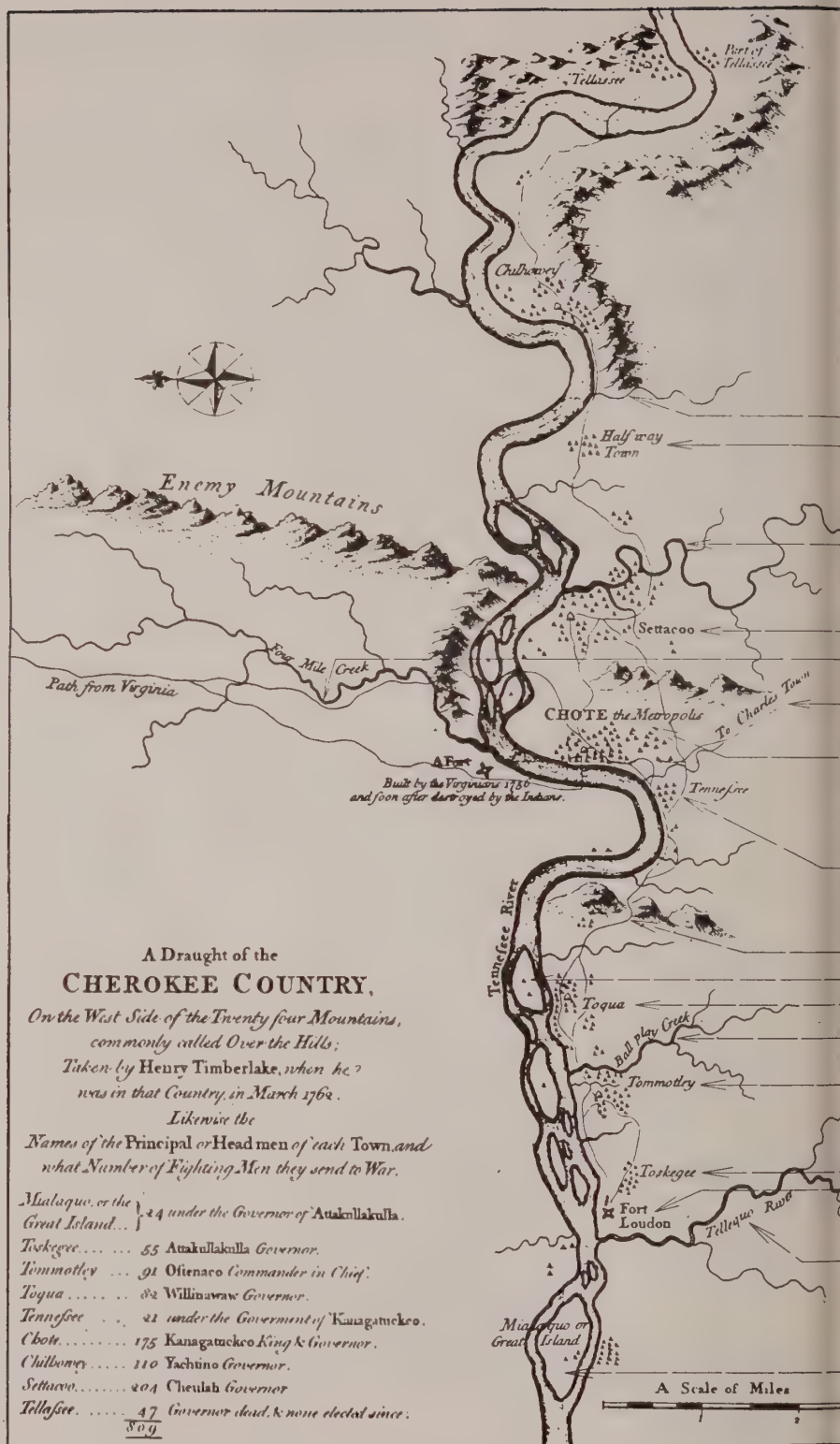
offered him an army commission, which he declined.* Three years later he was given a personal loan by Glen to enable him to establish himself as a trader among the Cherokee. After following that occupation for several years, he found his way back to Fort Toulouse in 1755. Governor Kerlerrec of French Louisiana accepted his story and made use of him as a propaganda agent among the Cherokee. He was aided by several other interesting characters. One was French John, a Canadian who supposedly was a slave of Old Hop, the Cherokee emperor, and another was a halfbreed known as Savannah Tom.

Another pro-French influence was exerted by a group of "Southern Shawnee" Indians, particularly those who in 1747 had established several towns along the upper reaches of the Coosa River, midway between the Upper Creeks and the Cherokee. They came from Pennsylvania and were led by Peter Chartier, probably the son of Martin Chartier, the Frenchman mentioned in a previous chapter who had traded with the Shawnee at French Lick while they were living in the Cumberland Valley, and who had accompanied the group of them which had settled in Pennsylvania. One writer has said they were a "thorn in the side of the English during the Seven Years' War." The Upper Creeks, in the vicinity of the French Fort Toulouse, were also under French influence and constituted a danger to the English cause.¹⁴

The center of the pro-French influence among the Overhill Cherokee was the town of Great Tellico, where Priber and Bonnefoy had earlier resided; and the chief of that town, called Mankiller, was quite friendly with the French. Strange as it may seem, Attakullakulla, the Little Carpenter, so noted for his support of the English cause earlier and later, was considered for a time the leader of the pro-French faction among the Cherokee. He had been captured in 1741 or 1742 by Francophile Indians and carried off to Canada, where he spent six years as a technical captive but still subject to French influence. He came back to the Overhill country about 1748 but then went on a long visit to the pro-French Indians. When he returned, about 1750 or 1751, the Cherokee were having serious trading difficulties with the South Carolinians because of the misconduct of several traders, and the Little Carpenter seems to have become convinced that trade relations with the French would be a means of making the Cherokee less dependent upon the English. For that purpose and also in the hope that the attacks by the Northern, French-controlled Indians might be stopped, overtures were made to the French as early as 1754.

The French, however, were not in position to take full advantage of the opportunity. They lacked an adequate supply of trading goods, a deficiency which was particularly characteristic of war times, as the British navy was able to play havoc with French commerce on the high seas. The Louisiana governor was hesitant about offering the Cherokee the amount of trade which would be necessary to

* According to Lieutenant Governor Bull of South Carolina, he actually accepted the commission and served in the Independent Regulars for a short time.



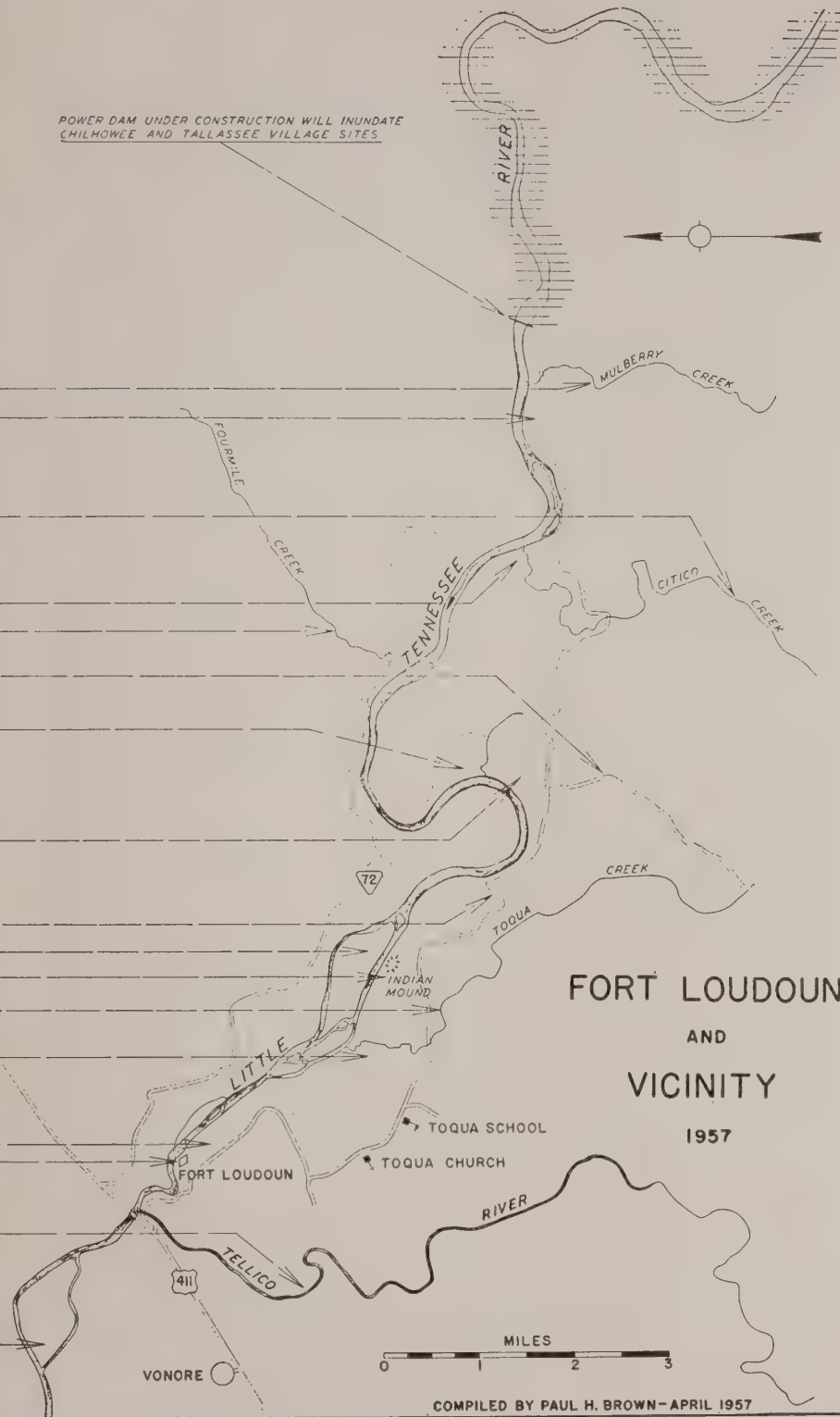
A Draught of the CHEROKEE COUNTRY,

On the West Side of the Twenty four Mountains,
commonly called Over the Hills;
Taken by Henry Timberlake, when he
was in that Country, in March 1762.

Likewise the
Names of the Principal or Head men of each Town, and
what Number of Fighting Men they send to War.

Mialaguo, or the Great Island...	24	under the Governor of 'Atakullakulla.
Toskegee...	55	Atakullakulla Governor.
Tommotley...	91	Ostenaco Commander in Chief.
Toqua...	82	Willinawaw Governor.
Tennessee...	21	under the Government of 'Kauagamecko.
Chote...	175	Kauagamecko King & Governor.
Chulhoway...	110	Yachino Governor.
Settacoo...	204	Cheulah Governor
Tellico...	47	Governor dead, & none elected since.
	809	

POWER DAM UNDER CONSTRUCTION WILL INUNDATE
CHILHOWEE AND TALLASSEE VILLAGE SITES



(from Paul Kelly: "Historic Fort Loudoun." Courtesy of Paul Brown, Chattanooga, and the Fort Loudoun Association)

lure them away from the English for fear that if they were not able to fulfill such promises, those Indians would be thrown completely into the arms of the English. Also, a fort in or near the Cherokee country would be necessary to protect the trade. Unable to get Cherokee permission to build one in their towns, the French built Fort Massac* on the Ohio River about eleven miles below the mouth of the Tennessee, but it was not completed until the fall of 1757.¹⁵

Even so, the situation was extremely dangerous for the English, especially in view of their bad reputation for encroaching with their settlements on Indian hunting grounds, the bad conduct of many of their traders,** and the dissatisfaction caused by the failure to build and garrison a strong fort in the Overhill country. The concern expressed by Major Lewis was well justified. While building the Virginia fort he learned that in response to letters from Fort Toulouse French John and a Cherokee woman who spoke Shawnee had been sent down to that fort with a message from the Cherokee leaders, including Old Hop and the Little Carpenter. A short time later Lewis surprised the Overhill chiefs in a secret council and was told that they had agreed to send a letter to Captain Demere at Fort Prince George telling him to return with all of his troops to Charleston and give up any design of building a fort in the Overhill country. Concerning the few of his soldiers who had come to Tomotley on the Little Tennessee River at the Little Carpenter's request, that chieftain explained that

he would take their Guns, and give them to his young men to hunt with, and as to their clothes they would soon be worn out and then their skins would be tanned, and be of the same colour as theirs, and that they should live among them as Slaves.

Lewis protested vigorously and induced the Indians to send instead a letter to Demere urging him to come to the Overhill country as quickly as possible. Still Lewis was convinced that the Little Carpenter was a "Great Villain" and would "do everything in his power to aid the French."¹⁶ After Lewis had departed, the pro-French faction, in response to a letter from the governor general of French Canada, sent a delegation to Detroit. The French commander encouraged them to resist the English, but suggested that the French could protect them more readily if they would move their towns to the Ohio River country. The Cherokee were pleased with the courtesy with which they were received but refused to commit themselves. They also conferred with leaders of the Huron and Ottawa Indians and told them to use their tomahawks against the English rather than against the Cherokee.¹⁷

The Building of Fort Loudoun—Thus while Governor Lyttelton was assembling the expedition which was to march to the Overhill Cherokee country and build

* At first named Fort de l'Ascension. It was known as Fort Assumption to the English.

** The rivalry of the South Carolina and Georgia colonies over the trade of the Southern Indians had made it practically impossible to enforce trade restrictions.

a fort for those Indians, it seemed that the Cherokee had never been so disaffected or so likely to join the French. It seems probable that had the expedition been delayed any longer, the alliance between the English and the Cherokee would have been broken at a time when it would have presented very serious dangers to the British cause. Although Lyttelton had learned of the Lewis expedition and the building of the Virginia fort, he determined to ignore those activities and to carry through the South Carolina plans without alteration. More successful than Glen in dealing with the assembly, he obtained a grant of £4,000 for the undertaking. Late in August, 1756, the troops assembled by Lyttelton joined their commander, Captain Raymond Demere, at Fort Prince George. Demere was an experienced officer who had served Lord Oglethorpe in defending the Georgia colony against Spanish incursions from Florida. He had a force of about two hundred men, including one company of royal troops and two companies of South Carolina militia, recruited and commanded by Captains John Stuart and John Postell, respectively. The engineer, who was given discretionary power in the construction of the fort, was John William Gerard de Brahm, a German who had established a colony of settlers in Georgia and had supervised the fortification of Charleston.¹⁸

The expedition left Fort Prince George on September 21 and followed the old trade route known as the Charles Town Path. They passed through a corner of Georgia and followed the Hiwassee River to near Murphy, North Carolina, from where they cut across to the Tellico, entering the Overhill country along the Northwest Passage.* Above Great Tellico they were met by the Little Carpenter and other chiefs and escorted to Tomotley. They were received in a very friendly manner by the Indians, which was a surprise to Demere, who had received reports from Lewis and others concerning the Cherokee disaffection. The Indians were greatly in need of presents, however, and Old Hop, the emperor, hinted very strongly to that effect, saying he was "quite Naked . . . an Old man and that Winter was coming on very fast."¹⁹

The construction of the fort was begun without delay, although some disagreement developed between De Brahm and the Indians as to its proper location. The Indians, supported by Demere, preferred a place on level ground which De Brahm criticized as being "between two commanding eminences," from which even the buckles of the soldiers could be seen. The site chosen was on the south bank of the Little Tennessee River near the mouth of the Tellico. A part of the fort was on top of the ridge along the river and the remainder at the foot of this hill. In contrast to other forts on the American frontier it was to be constructed, according to De Brahm's plan, like European forts of that period. Archaeological investigations in

* The location of this passage was recently discovered by Paul Brown of Chattanooga. See Fort Loudoun Association Research Report, 1955. His map showing the Demere route and also the alternative trading path is reproduced in Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 10.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Ft. Loudoun Park—Site of Fort Built by English Soldiers

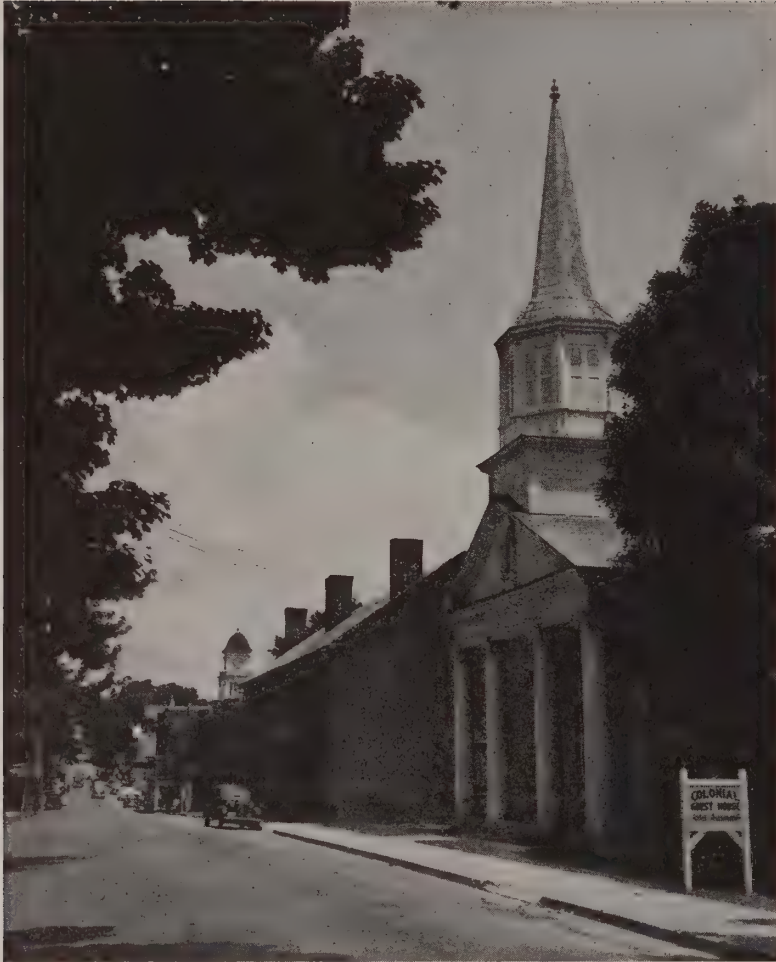
connection with the making of plans for the building of a replica of the fort at the site revealed, however, that although the general outlines of De Brahm's "profile" were followed, many deviations were made in the actual construction of the original fort. It was much more imposing than the Virginia stockade, covering between one and one and a half acres. Roughly diamond-shaped, it had a bastion projecting from each corner, each of which was to mount three cannon. The four bastions were named King George (II), Queen Caroline, Prince of Wales (for the future George III), and Duke of Cumberland. Around the boundary of the fort there was dug a moat or ditch, with the earth being used to build a supporting embankment, which was eventually supplemented by a palisade fifteen feet in height. De Brahm directed that young locust trees be planted in the ditch, which because of their long, sharp thorns would render the fort "impregnable at least against Indians who always engage naked." Two rows of lower palisades were built inside the fort, but they were apparently torn down to provide more room. Also inside were a well, a blacksmith shop, barracks, a guard house, and other buildings. Between the fort

and the river De Brahm planned some outworks to be named Ravelin Lyttelton and Fort Glen, but it seems they were never completed. The twelve small cannon were brought to the fort with great difficulty by the trader John Elliot. According to De Brahm, Elliot contrived to place the cannon on the backs of horses "cross ways over the pack saddle," but in the forested mountain country along the pack-horse trail "sometimes one end of a cannon would catch a tree, twist upon the saddle and drew [draw] the horse down"; thus several horses had their backs broken and had to be killed.²⁰

For a short time after the arrival of the expedition it seemed to Demere that its mere presence had removed the danger of French influence. The Little Carpenter led a raid into the Ohio country; before leaving he brought to Demere a letter he had received from the French and asked the commander to burn it. Now that you have burned it, he said, "I shall do the same with all the French I shall take." Demere cautioned him that although the Indians should kill and destroy as many of the French as they could "in time of Action," any prisoners they might take should not be subjected to any "barbarous or Cruel Death" but instead should be brought to Demere and he would pay the Indians for their trouble.²¹ Despite these protestations of friendship, and similar ones from Old Hop, Demere soon learned that the French influence was still strong at Great Tellico. Chief Mankiller and other warriors of that town attended a conference with the Southern Shawnee and Upper Creeks at Fort Toulouse on October 18. A plan for a joint attack against the English, with the Upper Creeks striking the first blow, was frustrated by the refusal of those Indians to be used as tools. Mankiller and most of his followers returned home; but four or five of the Tellico men accompanied the Frenchman Lantagnac and some of the Shawnee to New Orleans and, representing themselves as emissaries of the Cherokee Nation, signed a preliminary treaty of alliance with Governor Kerlerec. The treaty was preliminary in that the Cherokee were not to be considered actual allies of the French until after they had attacked the English; and the arrangement was also dependent on the approval (which actually was not obtained) of the governor of Canada and the Northern Indians. Kerlerec told the Cherokee:

... but you must First break out the War against the English, and don't let me hear of such Pityfull Doings as two or three scalps. Attack some Fort of Strength Knock on the Head 5 or 600 then you will get slaves and Plunder in Plenty, and we can come into your Towns and supply your Wants without Dread or Fear.²²

Exaggerated rumors of these negotiations and of the threat of a French and Indian attack came to Demere and the other officers and led to more rapid work in constructing the fort. The decision was made to mount the cannon at once and to build shelters for the men inside the partially-constructed stockade. On the same day this decision was made, in December, Mankiller came to see Demere



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Jonesboro—Main Street

and frankly told him that he disliked the English. He was showered with presents and invited to spend the night. Demere plied him with a considerable amount of liquor, and while "under the influence" Mankiller said he had visited the French at Fort Toulouse at the request of Old Hop and the Little Carpenter. As a result of this entertainment Mankiller went home apparently in a much more friendly disposition. A few days later John Stuart entertained the Little Carpenter, with whom he had become very friendly, and charged him with perfidy in view of Mankiller's comments. The Carpenter replied that Mankiller was a liar. To prove his friendship, he insisted that he be allowed to go at once to Charleston in company with Stuart to confer with Governor Lyttelton. Demere gave his consent,

but he told the Governor to send Stuart back to the fort as the Indians would be "prodigiously affronted" if he did not return. Thus is revealed Demere's realization of the great value of Stuart's influence over the Indians, a people whom Demere considered merely a "commodity . . . to be bought and sold," and "very little to be depended on. . . . There is nothing but deceitfulness in them all."²³

Meanwhile, Demere was having serious difficulties with De Brahm, the engineer, and a mutinous disposition developed on the part of the provincial troops. Not long after the original disagreement over the location of the fort, De Brahm had retired to the town of Tomotley, and refusing even to speak to Demere, sent his instructions for work on the fort to him in written form. He also threatened repeatedly to desert and return to Charleston. In December he told the militia that as soon as the fort was completed he would discharge them and they could then go home. Captain Postell, the commander of one of the militia companies, gave him support and indicated that when De Brahm should discharge his troops he would consider himself no longer under Demere's command. A council of war was held; Postell was privately admonished; De Brahm was informed he could discharge the men only from the works and not from service; and the three companies were lined up and Demere read to them the articles of war. It was made clear that if any of them departed they would be guilty of desertion. By this means outright mutiny was prevented. Postell later tried to explain in a letter to Governor Lyttelton that most of the militia were owners of plantations and that their crops might be ruined if they were not allowed to return home. On December 22 De Brahm sent Demere the final instructions for the completion of the fort, and despite the efforts of the other officers to dissuade him, he departed for Charleston three days later. His flight greatly amused and delighted the pro-French faction among the Cherokee. Even Old Hop called him the "warrior who ran away in the night." In view of the current threats of a French-Indian attack, together with the realization that the fort had not been completed to the point of being defensible, the situation of the expedition was precarious in the extreme. It was at the time of De Brahm's departure, however, that the fort received the name by which it was to become known—Fort Loudoun. De Brahm in his communications with Demere had been referring to it as Fort Semintorium. Captain Postell's letter to Lyttelton, dated December 25, is headed "Fort Loudoun." By that date, apparently Governor Lyttelton's wishes had become known—that the fort be named in honor of John Campbell, Fourth Earl of Loudoun, who was commander in chief* of all British troops in America from 1756 to 1758.²⁴

* It is of interest to note that in this capacity Lord Loudoun was the only British commander in the American colonies who actually ordered the quartering of British troops in the homes of the colonists. Mildred Lamb Lindsey, "The Role of the British Military Establishment and the Quartering Acts in the Background of the American Revolution" (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1957), 121. To the confusion of historians, another English fort, built at about the same time near the site of Winchester, Virginia, was also named Fort Loudoun.

On December 27 Stuart and the Little Carpenter, accompanied by a considerable number of other chiefs and warriors, started out for Charleston. During the next two months the Indians had several conferences with Governor Lyttelton and obtained a number of concessions. One was the rescinding of John Elliot's license as a trader. Elliot was greatly disliked in the Overhill country because of his propensity for cheating the Indians, but his misdemeanors had been forgiven by the South Carolina authorities because of his great service in transporting the cannon to the site of the fort. An act was passed by the assembly offering bounties for scalps of Frenchmen and pro-French Indians, with double bounties being given for scalps taken in towns friendly to the English. The Little Carpenter asked several times to be sent to England to pay homage again to the King, something he had longed to do ever since his earlier visit in 1730. Lyttelton felt obliged to refuse, but apparently left room for the Little Carpenter to continue to hope that in due time he would be permitted to go. Therefore, he returned home more firmly attached to the English and ready to lead the Cherokee in the war against the French. Old Hop sent out runners to declare a general war, two hundred warriors went to Virginia, and even Mankiller promised "to be good."²⁵

The pro-French Indians, however, were not going to leave Mankiller alone. About the first of June eight Shawnee warriors appeared at Great Tellico and proposed a raid on the Virginia frontier. With the consent of Old Hop, who probably was enticed by the double bounty paid for scalps taken in a Cherokee town, officers and soldiers of Fort Loudoun and a few Cherokee, including Old Hop's son, ambushed the Shawnee as they were leaving Great Tellico. Three Shawnee were killed but the other five escaped. Those who escaped attempted to arouse the Lower Creeks against the English, but without success. At about the same time an officer of the fort, Robert Wall, and a soldier named John Brown had deserted and attempted to join the French at Fort Toulouse. They were seized in the Creek country by an English trader, Daniel Pepper, and sent to Charleston under guard, but Brown escaped.* Pepper sent Demere some alarming intelligence about an alleged plot among the head men of the Cherokee to take Fort Loudoun and massacre its garrison. The Lower Creeks, said Pepper, had been asked to provide a refuge for the Cherokee women and children in case the attack should be repulsed. The plan as described was characterized by the customary Indian trickery. The Cherokee were going to induce some Northern, pro-French Indians

* Brown apparently testified that Wall boasted that he would "put the French in a way to take Fort Loudoun." Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 110. But Wall in a letter to Demere asking his intervention in his behalf, denied any intent to join the French. Wall to Demere, June 1, 1757, Lyttelton Papers. According to Professor Alden, Wall, along with John Stuart, had contributed a very important service in winning the friendship of the Indians, but Alden admits that Wall probably was a "rascal," even though he was released by Lyttelton because of lack of evidence and the intercession of a Creek chieftain. *John Stuart*, 60-61, 93 n.

to approach the fort in a hostile manner, and the Cherokee warriors would run to the fort shamming fear and ask for shelter. When enough of them should have been admitted they would

Knock the Garrison in the Head, Sally out and joyn the Nottewagas [Northern Indians], burn the Fort, & proceed to Drive all the Rest of the white people entirely from their Nation. which scheme they propose putting in Practice this Summer, in the mean time they intend to behave with the utmost Civility & moderation to the English, and to ingratiate themselves with the Officers all in their Power till their Plott is Ripe.

Pepper also reported that two head men of the Overhill town of Chote had been at Fort Toulouse conferring with a Creek warrior named the Mortar, whom he believed to be a "great Villain."²⁶

Demere was "amazed" at Pepper's dispatch but was inclined to believe that it was "only old Talks Renewed again," since everything at the fort was "quiet and calm." Nevertheless, both he and Stuart told the Little Carpenter about the letter. The Cherokee diplomat responded with the "strongest protestations of friendship," and declared that while he was alive "no hurt shall happen to the English in his Nation." He admitted, however, that some of the other Cherokee were foolish and listened to the bad talks of the French. He also reported that the French had built a fort on the Savannah River and another (Massac) on the Ohio near the mouth of the Tennessee. Fortunately, the fort the Great Tellico people expected the French to build at Hiwassee Old Town on the trade route between the Overhill country and Charleston, did not materialize. When Demere could promise only thirty men to help the Cherokee drive the French out of Fort Massac, the Little Carpenter laughed. That chieftain was also concerned about a mammoth meeting, representative of all parts of the Cherokee Nation, called by Old Hop to be held at Chote to hear a "talk" which had been brought by two Creek warriors to the Overhill country. He feared that the talk would be pro-French. He had not originally planned to attend, but now he had decided to do so in order to counteract the pro-French influence. When the meeting was held, early in July, the pro-English leaders of the Cherokee were so much in evidence that the Creek talk was not even delivered.²⁷

An important factor in the frustration of the pro-French efforts among the Cherokee was the rapid progress being made in completing the construction of Fort Loudoun. On June 26, 1757, Captain Demere wrote Lyttelton that the fort was entirely done "to Mr. Debrahms's Last Supplement and Agreeable [*sic*] to your Excellency Order's [*sic*] to me."²⁸ A month later he wrote, "Our fort is entirely completed and in a posture of defense."²⁹ Work continued for several months more, however, inside the fort, completing the construction of a guardhouse and other buildings. Early in August Raymond Demere's younger brother, Paul, arrived with

fresh troops, and the two companies of the provincial militia were dismissed. Efforts were made to induce them to re-enlist but they were unsuccessful. On August 14 Raymond turned over the command of the fort to his brother and returned to Charleston. Captain Paul Demere remained in command until the fort was surrendered to the Indians in August, 1760. Unfortunately, he was not as capable or experienced as Raymond, and events were to prove that he was unable to handle as adequately the problem of maintaining peace with the Cherokee.³⁰

The Cherokee War, 1758-1761—Relations between the English and the Cherokee became seriously strained in the spring of 1758 and flared into actual warfare before the end of 1759. A combination of causes brought on the conflict, and both the colonies of Virginia and South Carolina shared the responsibility for this unfortunate result. The Cherokee were displeased with Virginia because of the failure to garrison the small fort near Chote which Andrew Lewis had built in 1756. Late that year Governor Dinwiddie had planned to send troops for that purpose and had selected a commander, but then he postponed action because of a fear that the French influence was so strong among the Cherokee that the garrison would be in serious peril. He assured Old Hop, however, that troops would be sent by the spring of 1758, and then he completely defaulted on that promise, since relations were still unfriendly. The fort eventually was destroyed by the Indians.³¹

Virginia also failed to meet the Cherokee demand for the establishment of trade relations. John Stuart's reports of his conversations with the Little Carpenter are filled with that chieftain's complaints about the inadequacy of the trade with South Carolina and the continued mistreatment of the Indians by the South Carolina traders.³² The Little Carpenter hoped that a supplementary trade from Virginia would relieve the pressure and lessen the Indians' discontent, but it was not forthcoming. Virginia attempted in 1757-1758 to establish a public trade with low prices to the Indians and actually ordered a large supply of goods from England; but the first and only shipment of goods, in the fall of 1759, was called back before it reached the Cherokee country because of the outbreak of hostilities. Meanwhile, the efforts of the newly-appointed superintendent of Indian affairs south of the Ohio River, Edmund Atkin, to acquire authority to license all private traders in the Southern colonies came to naught. Although the South Carolina trade became more adequate for a time in 1758, the trade problem remained as a serious cause of discontent among the Cherokee.

The leading precipitants of dissension and war arose, strangely enough, in connection with the aid given by the Cherokee in the war against the French, especially the large number of warriors who went to Virginia to participate in the campaigns against Fort Duquesne. The two hundred Cherokee who had joined the fruitless expedition of 1757 had been useful but troublesome allies. The much larger number (five or six hundred) who participated for short periods of

time in the campaign of 1758 were of less use and much more troublesome. Many of them arrived too early for the campaign, since the route selected by the commander, General John Forbes, was of such a nature that it required a great amount of preparation before the march could begin. Made restless by this delay and by idleness, large numbers of the Cherokee began to drift away and go home. The Indians also complained that they were not adequately supplied with equipment, especially paint, which was an absolute essential for Indian warfare. Professor Gipson has shown, however, that the Indians' demands for presents, equipment, and rewards were quite extravagant. For example, William Byrd III, who had recruited some of the Cherokee in their towns, had been compelled to promise each Indian "a Reward in Goods . . . to the Value of forty weight of leather . . . to make them amends for the loss of the Summer hunt." Realizing the great importance of Indian allies in frontier warfare, General Forbes yielded to the Indians' demands as far as he was able, but it is probable that the supplies of paint were inadequate. Also, he adopted the policy of reserving some of the presents until the campaign was over, hoping thereby to reduce the number of desertions. Another problem was to restrain the Cherokee from waging war against some pro-French Indians whom the Pennsylvanians were trying to lure away from their French alliance. Also, the Virginia law offering rewards for the scalps of pro-French Indians led some unscrupulous whites to kill Cherokee warriors and turn in their scalps, claiming they were French Indians.³³

One of the most serious incidents occurred in May, 1758. A group of warriors from the Overhill town of Settico, upon their departure for home, were deprived of the horses which had been given to them for use during the campaign. While passing along the Virginia frontier in Bedford County they decided to replace them by stealing some horses owned by white settlers. The settlers naturally pursued them and recovered the horses, killing several of the Indians. Moytoy, the Settico chieftain, was enraged and induced Old Hop to send a retaliatory party to seek revenge. The danger of a full scale war was great, but some of the Cherokee chiefs admitted that their warriors were at fault, and Governor Lyttelton promptly offered presents to assuage the grief of the relatives of those Indians who had been killed. The Little Carpenter, who had postponed joining Forbes' expedition because of ill omens observed by his medicine man, journeyed to Virginia in the fall of 1758 with a view to preserving peace. By some means he was induced to join Forbes' army as it approached Fort Duquesne. Becoming dissatisfied,* however, he and his nine companions left the army shortly before the campaign reached its successful climax. They were pursued, disarmed, and taken as prisoners to Winchester. This unfortunate humiliation of the chief who was second in importance in the whole Cherokee Nation was fraught with great danger to the English cause, but fortunately the Little Carpenter was per-

* He later claimed that he had received advance information that the French had abandoned the fort.

mitted an audience with Governor Francis Fauquier, who found him "conscious and cast down on account of his bad behaviour," and was able to pacify him.³⁴

The news of Attakullakulla's humiliation reached the Cherokee towns before he had returned, however, and caused great resentment. That ill-feeling was observed and commented on by a Presbyterian missionary, the Reverend William Richardson, who visited Fort Loudoun and attempted to preach to the Indians as well as to the soldiers in the winter of 1758-59. He left early in February and wrote in his diary that the Cherokee were "in all appearances on the eve of a war with Virginia," and that they were expecting the French and the French Indians, toward whom "they seem too well affected."³⁵ The Little Carpenter, after his return home, attempted to quiet his followers, and in the spring of 1759 he visited Governor Lyttelton in Charleston and again expressed his loyalty to the English. At about that time, however, a visit of the Creek chieftain named Mortar, who was friendly toward the French, re-aroused the Overhill Cherokee, particularly in the town of Settico, where Moytoy still burned for revenge. From this town war parties went out toward Virginia, but attacked the innocent inhabitants of the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina and brought back about twenty scalps. Governor Lyttelton demanded that the leaders of the Settico raid be turned over to the English for punishment. This was impossible, explained the Little Carpenter, because the Settico leader was a relative of the Great Warrior, Oconostota; but most of the scalps were surrendered and burned, and the town of Settico made a public apology for the raid. For some time thereafter the Overhill Cherokee remained quiet, but when Governor Lyttelton cut off the supply of ammunition for the whole Cherokee Nation, they became restless again.

This ammunition order was due mainly to the growing disaffection among the Lower Cherokee, who were antagonized by the encroachments of the South Carolina settlers upon their hunting grounds. Cherokee warriors also charged that while they were away hunting or fighting their wives had been violated by the soldiers stationed at Fort Prince George (including even the post commander, Lieutenant Richard Coytmore). With the cutting off of the ammunition supply by the English, the French agents were again in position to exercise influence, as they were able to offer ammunition in exchange for English scalps. The Overhill Cherokee were reported continually going down the Tennessee to Ft. Massac (Assumption) to get guns and gunpowder. Isolated scalpings became frequent and open warfare seemed inevitable. Fort Loudoun was cut off from communications with Charleston, and the Indians attempted to destroy the cattle belonging to the garrison; but the cattle were brought within the fort, slaughtered, and salted.

In view of this situation Governor Lyttelton began fitting out an expedition to force the Cherokee to keep the peace, neglecting, however, to call upon General Jeffrey Amherst, Lord Loudoun's successor, for aid. Before the expedition left Charleston a delegation from the Cherokee Indians, including Oconostota from



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Confluence of the Cumberland and Obey Rivers

the Overhill country, arrived for the purpose of conferring with the Governor. Lyttelton rejected their overtures for peace, and the expedition marched to Fort Prince George, with the Indian delegates taken along under guard, virtually as prisoners. At the fort most of them were released, but twenty-eight, including Oconostota, were confined in a small hut scarcely large enough for six. In conference with the Little Carpenter and other chiefs, Lyttelton reminded them of the provision of the treaty of 1730 requiring that if a Cherokee killed an Englishman he should be turned over to the governor for punishment according to English law, and demanded that twenty-four guilty Indians be surrendered. Despite the vigorous efforts of the Little Carpenter to accede to the demand, most of the Indians involved in the outrages escaped across the mountains. Lyttelton then required the Cherokee leaders to sign a new treaty, agreeing that a hostage should be kept in Fort Prince George for each guilty Indian not immediately surrendered. He selected as hostages twenty-four of the Indian chiefs who had conferred with him at Charleston, but at Little Carpenter's request he released Oconos-

tota and two other important chiefs, who were replaced by warriors. Since his troops were mutinous and threatened with smallpox, he then returned with the expedition to Charleston, taking with him the three Indians who had been surrendered for punishment. He recommended to the English authorities that these three (and the other twenty-one, if surrendered) be pardoned and sent back to the tribe as an illustration of English mercy, but this recommendation was apparently not made generally known among the Indians.

The reaction of the Indians to the keeping of the hostages was extremely unfavorable and led directly to more widespread hostilities. Most of the twenty-four hostages were leading members of the Cherokee Nation who had engaged in no acts of hostility against the English, but had gone to Charleston under a promise of safe return in an effort to preserve peace and thus had unwarily placed themselves in Governor Lyttelton's power. The Indians could not but believe that the English governor was guilty of an act of bad faith and they repeatedly demanded the release of the hostages from their confinement in Fort Prince George. The fort was soon practically in a state of siege and scalping raids along the frontier became prevalent. On February 16, 1760, Oconostota lured Lieutenant Coytmore out of the fort, ostensibly for another conversation. When the Indian suddenly waved his bridle in the air, the commander of the fort was fired on from ambush and mortally wounded. The soldiers in the fort were enraged and very quickly massacred the twenty-one hostages when they resisted being put in irons. This action brought the whole Cherokee Nation into war against the English, and the Overhill Cherokee, under the leadership of their newly-elected emperor, Standing Turkey, soon began an attack on Fort Loudoun. Only the Little Carpenter, who disapproved of the war and retired to the woods, remained loyal to the English.³⁶

Fortunately, by 1760 the French and Indian War had practically been decided in favor of the English. The French Fort Duquesne had fallen in 1758 and Quebec in 1759, and Montreal was soon to fall. The French had also been deserted by many of their Indian allies, and thus the Cherokee were forced to fight almost alone. Had they deserted the English three or four years earlier, the situation would have been vastly different, as the French at that time were in a much better position to take advantage of a Cherokee alliance, to the serious discomfiture of the English. It is in this fact that we find the great significance of the building and manning of Fort Loudoun on the Little Tennessee. These measures helped postpone the threatened rupture of the Anglo-Cherokee alliance until it came too late to be of any significant help to the French in the war. It is somewhat ironical that the fort and its garrison were to become casualties of an Indian war which more astute diplomacy at the higher levels could have avoided.

Governor Lyttelton appears to have been determined to prosecute a war against the Cherokee; yet he did not request any aid from General Amherst until after it had become evident that the treaty of 1759 would not restore peace.

Amherst responded immediately with 1,200 troops, which arrived at Charleston on April 1, 1760, under the command of Colonel Archibald Montgomery. Since these troops were needed for a projected campaign in Canada, Montgomery was ordered to chastise the Cherokee and return immediately to New York. Lyttelton also called on the governors of North Carolina and Virginia for aid. North Carolina failed to send any help whatever, and the force organized in Virginia under the command of William Byrd III, which was to send supplies to Fort Loudoun and to cooperate with Montgomery, reached the New River in southwestern Virginia too late for either purpose. Meanwhile, Montgomery's army, augmented by South Carolina troops, ravaged the Lower Cherokee towns. Realizing the difficulties which would be encountered in crossing the mountains to Fort Loudoun, the General sent overtures of peace to the other branches of the Cherokee Nation. Had not those Indians been so fearful that any peace emissaries they might send would be seized and possibly slaughtered as Lyttelton's hostages had been, it is very probable that they would have responded to the overtures and the war would have been brought to an end. As it was, not having heard favorably from the Cherokee, Montgomery determined to march to the Middle towns. There he met in battle on June 27 a large force of Indians and suffered such heavy casualties (though not as many as the Cherokee) that he despaired of being able to reach Fort Loudoun encumbered by the many wounded and decided to return to Fort Prince George and then to Charleston.* Arguing that he had fulfilled the one part of his instructions—to chastise the Cherokee—he was now bound to fulfill the other part by returning with his troops to New York. This he did, despite the plaintive appeals of Acting-Governor William Bull, who had replaced Lyttelton when that governor had departed for London in April. Thus Fort Loudoun was left to its fate.

Meanwhile, the fort was closely besieged by the Indians under the command of Oconostota. Unable to take the place by assault and with their efforts at trickery being foiled by the Little Carpenter's revelation of their plans to Captain Demere, they hoped to starve the garrison into submission. Unable to send supplies through the Indian-infested country, Governor Bull resorted to sending two messengers who managed to slip into the fort with a supply of ribbon and some paint which the soldiers were able to trade to the Indians for enough food to last for about two weeks. Several members of the garrison had Indian wives who brought additional amounts of food to the fort. News also arrived of the relief expeditions of Montgomery and Byrd and hopes were raised. But as weeks passed and no help arrived the situation became increasingly desperate. Then the Indians exultingly informed the garrison that they had defeated Montgomery's army and driven it back to Charleston, and that they had "killed and scalp'd so

* The Little Carpenter later expressed the opinion that if Montgomery had pushed on to Fort Loudoun resistance would have melted away before him and the fort and garrison would have been saved. Alden, *John Stuart*, 112.

many that their hands were sore." A messenger sent to Fort Prince George to learn if this report were true failed to return. For two months the garrison received no word from the English and came to believe that they were "abandoned and forsaken by God and man." Oconostota's men guarded the fort and the Indian wives of the soldiers more and more closely until food supplies declined to the point that the soldiers were subsisting mainly on horseflesh. Many became ill and others deserted and threw themselves on the mercy of the Indians. Early in August, 1760, the mutinous disposition became so widespread that Captain Demere sent Captain Stuart and Lieutenant James Adamson to Oconostota to try to arrange terms of surrender.³⁷

The articles of capitulation, signed August 7, provided that the soldiers should be allowed to march out of the fort with arms and drums and as much baggage as they might choose to carry. They were to be provided with horses and an Indian escort and permitted to march unmolested either to Virginia or to Fort Prince George. Those unable to march were to be cared for by the Indians until they were able to leave. The fort, its cannon, and all spare guns and ammunition were to be turned over to the Cherokee on the day the march was to begin. The next day those able to march started for Fort Prince George accompanied by an escort commanded by Oconostota. After the party had camped for the night about ten or fifteen miles from the fort, the Indian escort disappeared. The next morning as the march was resumed the Indians attacked from ambush, with Captain Demere being among the first to fall. The whites returned the fire but realizing soon the hopelessness of defense they threw down their arms, and Oconostota was able to stop the slaughter. All of the officers were killed except John Stuart, who may have been purposely spared because he was held in such high regard by the Indians. More than twenty of the privates were massacred and also three women. The remainder were taken as prisoners and tortured as they were marched back to the fort, with the Indians slapping their faces with the scalps of their dead comrades. The reasons why the Indians violated their agreement are obscure. One theory is that the soldiers buried some gunpowder in the fort and that the Indians discovered it and considered that the agreement had first been violated by the whites.* More plausible is the view that the Indians were overcome by their desire for vengeance and were acting under the incitement of the Creek chieftain, Mortar, who was in the Overhill country at the time. Mortar immediately sent word to the French governor at New Orleans that the fort had been taken, and Kerlerec dispatched several boats with ammunition for the Cherokee; but the boats were unable to get past the obstructions in the Tennessee River below the site of Chattanooga.

John Stuart was purchased from his captor by the Little Carpenter, who did his best to protect him. But Oconostota was planning an attack on Fort Prince

* There is some evidence that the Indians did discover some buried gunpowder, but after the massacre rather than before. Williams, *Dawn*, 253.

George, and he told Stuart he would be compelled to direct the fire of the captured cannon in that attack. If he did not do so he would be forced to watch the other prisoners being burned to death in front of him. Stuart considered it imperative that he should escape, and the Little Carpenter was successful in arranging the strategy by which he was able to do so. He took Stuart out on a hunt and instead of returning guided his English friend to William Byrd's camp in southwestern Virginia. The attack on Fort Prince George was not made, probably because of Stuart's escape and because of the failure of the expected help from the French to arrive. Also, William Byrd threatened an attack from Virginia. Some of the other prisoners were taken to New Orleans, but many of the remainder were ransomed by South Carolina.³⁸

When news arrived of the fall of Fort Loudoun, General Amherst in New York and the governors of South Carolina* and Virginia began to concert plans for retaliation against the Cherokee. Amherst sent 1,200 troops to Charleston; Bull in South Carolina succeeded with some difficulty in raising about the same number; but the Virginia assembly refused to provide any additional troops for Colonel Byrd, merely instructing him to march into the Cherokee country and cooperate with Grant. Considering his supplies, as well as his army, inadequate, Byrd moved down only as far as a settlement called Stalnaker's on the upper Holston and remained there, to the considerable disgust of Colonel Grant, who arrived at Fort Prince George with an army of 2,600 on May 27, 1761. Before reaching the fort, Grant had been met by the Little Carpenter with overtures of peace, but he rejected them. He marched into the Middle Cherokee country and on June 10 defeated the Indians at a place only two miles from the site of Montgomery's battle two years before. After spending about a month devastating Middle and Valley towns and destroying the Indians' crops, he returned with his army to Fort Prince George. A correspondent at that fort wrote on July 10, "Near five thousand Cherokees, men, women and children, have been driven into the mountains to starve, their only sustenance for some time past being horse-flesh."³⁹

Faced with this disaster, Attakullakulla and Standing Turkey, the Cherokee emperor, went to Byrd's camp** to sue for peace. Byrd referred them to Grant for peace terms and then resigned his command. Negotiations began at Fort Prince George on August 28 on the basis of peace terms proposed by Governor Bull, which provided for exchange of prisoners, reopening of trade, and permission for the English to build forts in the Cherokee country at will. One additional clause, providing for the execution of four Cherokee chiefs, was rejected by the Little Carpenter, and the negotiations were moved to Ashley Ferry, where a preliminary

* North Carolina also made some efforts to participate, but they were so slowly developed that they were completely ineffective.

** Byrd had built Fort Attakullakulla at Stalnaker's, naming it in honor of the Little Carpenter.

treaty was signed on September 22, without that obnoxious clause. After some further difficulties had been resolved, a definitive treaty was concluded on December 17. Thus the Cherokee War was ended.

Meanwhile, at the suggestion of Colonel Grant, the Cherokee had sent a large delegation headed by Emperor Standing Turkey and Little Carpenter's brother, Willinawa, to conclude peace with Byrd's army. That force, now under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen and including such important figures as Major Andrew Lewis, Nathaniel Gist, and Dr. Thomas Walker (as commissary), had moved to the Long Island of the Holston (the site of Kingsport, Tennessee) and built Fort Robinson, named for John Robinson, an influential Virginian. It was soon joined by Colonel Hugh Waddell and about 400 North Carolinians. Soon after the peace had been concluded Fort Robinson was evacuated and never again was garrisoned.

After signing the treaty at Fort Robinson, Standing Turkey asked Colonel Stephen to send an officer of his command with them to their towns to cement the peace. Stephen hesitated, but two young Virginians volunteered for that duty: Ensign* Henry Timberlake and Sergeant Thomas Sumter. Instead of traveling with the Indians overland, however, the Englishmen preferred to make the journey by canoe, the trip requiring twenty-three days. At Tomotley they were well received by Ostenaco (also called Outacity and Judd's friend), the chief of that town, who invited Timberlake to live with him in his home during his stay. Sumter was given similar hospitality in the home of another chief. They remained throughout the winter of 1761-62, and Timberlake made careful notes concerning the manners and customs of the Indians and drew a very accurate map of the Overhill towns. When included in his *Memoirs*, published in London in 1765, these notes and the map became invaluable sources of information concerning the Cherokee. Timberlake was taken to see the ruins of Fort Loudoun, which presumably had been destroyed by the Indians; and he read to a large meeting at Chote the articles of peace. Ostenaco then harangued the Indians to keep the peace, but Timberlake observed in his *Memoirs* that most of the Cherokee were still strongly attached to the French.**

Accompanied by Ostenaco and a considerable number of Indians, Timberlake and Sumter returned to Virginia in the spring, going by way of the abandoned Forts Robinson and Attakullakulla. At Williamsburg Ostenaco insisted that he be allowed to go to England. The Little Carpenter had talked so much about his own visit in 1730 that Ostenaco wished to go to see for himself whether the Little Carpenter had "told them lies." Governor Fauquier at length consented and sent him and two other Indians to England in company with Timberlake and Sumter.

* As reward for this service he was later promoted to lieutenant.

** They also still held many of the prisoners taken with Fort Loudoun. It eventually became necessary for the governor of South Carolina to cut off the trade with the Cherokee to obtain their release. Alden, *John Stuart*, 177.

The Indian chief created quite a furore in London. The poet Oliver Goldsmith waited three hours for an opportunity to visit him, and Sir Joshua Reynolds painted his portrait. This visit to England of Ostenaco, like that of Attakullakulla and his companions in 1730, greatly increased the influence of the British among the Cherokee.⁴⁰

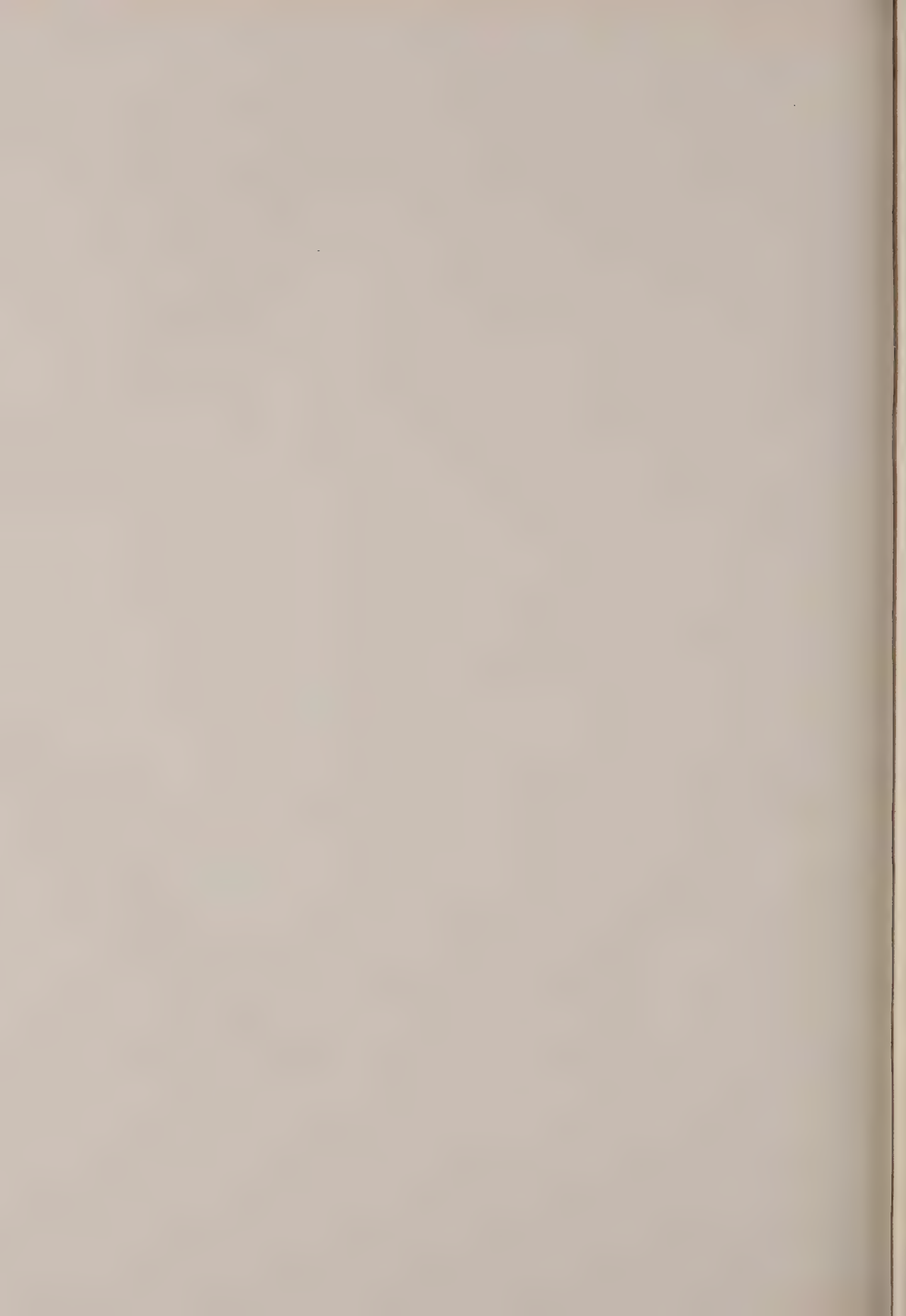
Those Indians had been reduced to the greatest extremity by the Cherokee War. From about 5,000 warriors at the beginning of that struggle the number had fallen to about 2,500. Many of their towns had been burned and their fields destroyed, and they became again victims of a smallpox epidemic. They were less able than ever before to resist the encroachments of the English upon their lands about which the French had warned them. Actually, the building of Fort Loudoun and the sending of expeditions to garrison it, other expeditions to try to relieve it when it was besieged, and still others to crush the Cherokee after its surrender, supplied incentives to that end. Many of the soldiers who thus became acquainted with this rich western country longed to return as settlers. As will be noted in the next chapter, British authorities attempted to protect the Indians' rights, but the tide of the westward movement was too strong. The next few years were to see the beginnings of the permanent settlement of Tennessee.

CHAPTER IV—NOTES

1. One of the best accounts of the building of Fort Loudoun and of the Cherokee War which followed is P. M. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun on the Little Tennessee* (Raleigh, N. C., n.d.). This is a reprint of two articles: "Anglo-French Rivalry in the Cherokee Country, 1754-1757," and "Fort Loudoun in the Cherokee War, 1758-1761," in the *North Carolina Historical Review*, July, October, 1925. It should be supplemented with John Richard Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier: A Study of Indian Relations, War, Trade, and Land Problems in the Southern Wilderness, 1754-1775* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1944), 3-136. Other good accounts are Williams, *Dawn*, 145-277; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 52-122; Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 94-132; and (although brief) Archibald Henderson, *The Conquest of the Old Southwest* (New York, 1920), 49-95. An excellent, well-illustrated, popular account is the brochure published by the Fort Loudoun Association: Paul Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun* (Vonore, Tenn., 1958). Gipson, *British Empire*, IX, Chap. 4, is a good account of the Cherokee War. See also Chapman J. Milling, *Red Carolinians* (Chapel Hill, 1940), Chap. 15; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 46-63.
2. Alden, *John Stuart*, 32.
3. Glen to Board of Trade, July 27, 1752, quoted in Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 4.
4. *Ibid.*; Alden, *John Stuart*, 36-37.
5. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 4-5.
6. Gipson, *British Empire*, IV, 225-311, *passim*.
7. Alden, *John Stuart*, 42-43; Williams, *Dawn*, 145-46, 149 n.; W. N. Franklin, "Virginia and the Cherokee Indian Trade, 1753-1775," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 22.
8. Alden, *John Stuart*, 38-39, 47; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 6-7.

9. *Ibid.*; Alden, *John Stuart*, 44-47. Williams, *Dawn*, 149, correctly identifies the Dinwiddie agent as Nathaniel Gist. Alden gives his name as Edward Guest.
10. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 7n. Cf. Alden, *John Stuart*, 46.
11. *Ibid.*, 45-47, 49-50; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 7-9.
12. Quoted in *ibid.*, 10.
13. *Ibid.*, 10-14. For writers' confusion of this Virginia fort and the later Fort Loudoun, see Williams, *Dawn*, 171n.
14. Alden, *John Stuart*, 12, 15, 52-53. The Lantagnac report is printed with an introduction, in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 177-84.
15. Alden, *John Stuart*, 32-33, 52.
16. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 13. See also Williams, *Dawn*, 176-80.
17. Gipson, *British Empire*, VII, 64-65.
18. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 14-15; Alden, *John Stuart*, 57-58 (the biographical sketch of Stuart, pp. 156-75, shows that contrary to tradition he did not come to America with Oglethorpe). For a sketch of Demere by Elsworth Brown see unpublished Research Reports, 1956, Fort Loudoun Association (Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville). For De Brahm see Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 187-88.
19. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 15.
20. *Ibid.*, 15-17; Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 11-17. A portion of De Brahm's account is printed in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 186-94, together with a reproduction of his "profile" of the fort (also in Williams, *Dawn*, opposite p. 192).
21. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 18.
22. *Ibid.*, 18-19. See also Alden, *John Stuart*, 61-62.
23. *Ibid.*, 62; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 19.
24. *Ibid.*, 20; Alden, *John Stuart*, 59-60; Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 104-08; Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 13, 16; Postell to Lyttelton, December 25, 1756, Fort Loudoun Papers in William Henry Lyttelton Collection (The Clements Library, University of Michigan). Microfilm copies, owned by the Fort Loudoun Association, are on deposit in the Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville. These papers include many of the De Brahm instructions to Demere.
25. Alden, *John Stuart*, 62-63; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 21; Stuart to Lyttelton, May 29, 1757, Lyttelton Papers. Stuart wrote that the Little Carpenter continued "fixed in His Resolution of going to England." One of the group which went to Virginia, led by Judge's (Judd's) Friend (Ostenaco), planned to solicit a garrison for the Virginia fort and also establishment of trade relations with Virginia. They were accompanied by John Elliot, who apparently hoped to get a Virginia license.
26. Stuart to Lyttelton, June 12, July 9, 1757; Pepper to Demere, June 27, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.
27. Demere to Lyttelton, July 11, 20, 1757; Stuart to Lyttelton, July 11, 1757.
28. Lyttelton Papers.
29. Demere to Lyttelton, July 30, 1757, quoted in Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 21.
30. *Ibid.*, 21, 23; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 22.
31. Alden, *John Stuart*, 74.
32. Lyttelton Papers, *passim*.
33. Franklin, "Virginia and the Cherokee Indian Trade, 1753-1775," 25-26; Alden, *John Stuart*, 74-79; Gipson, *British Empire*, VII, 255-57.
34. *Ibid.*, 257-58; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 23-25; Alden, *John Stuart*, 79-80; Williams, *Dawn*, 198-206.
35. *Ibid.*, 210-23.
36. *Ibid.*, 228-42; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 25-32; Alden, *John Stuart*, 80-88, 101-104;

- Gipson, *British Empire*, IX, 61-70. These authors, and also Helen Shaw, *British Administration of the Southern Indians, 1756-1783* (Lancaster, Pa., 1931), 16-17, believe the war could have been avoided.
37. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 32-36; Williams, *Dawn*, 225-46; Alden, *John Stuart*, 104-17; Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 28-31.
 38. *Ibid.*, 31-34; Hamer, *Fort Loudoun*, 36-38; Williams, *Dawn*, 246-56; Alden, *John Stuart*, 117-19.
 39. *Ibid.*, 119-29; Williams, *Dawn*, 256-61.
 40. *Ibid.*, 261-77; Alden, *John Stuart*, 129-33; Williams (ed.), *Timberlake's Memoirs*, 36-147; Carolyn Thomas Foreman, *Indians Abroad, 1493-1838* (Norman, Okla., 1943), 44-81.



CHAPTER V

Beginnings of Permanent Settlement

TREATY SETTLEMENT, 1763, AND BRITISH WESTERN POLICIES—The treaties of peace signed in Paris (1763) ending the Seven Years' War (called French and Indian War in America) caused a remarkable transformation of the territorial claims of European powers on the North American continent. The French ceded to the British their claims to Canada and to the eastern part of Louisiana. The latter embraced all the land east of the Mississippi River with the one exception of the Isle of Orleans, on which the city of New Orleans is located. The Isle of Orleans and all French claims west of the Mississippi were given to Spain. Spain in turn ceded to Great Britain its colony of Florida. Thus the British came into uncontested possession, so far as European claims were concerned, of all the territory east of the Mississippi, with the one small exception of New Orleans.

With the ending of hostilities and the removal of the French menace, the people of the back country of the Carolinas and Virginia were ready to pour across the mountain barrier and take up land in the interior. The British authorities, with a view to maintaining peaceful relations with the Indians, attempted to restrain this westward movement, but without much success. As explained by a governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore,

The established Authority of any Government in America, and the policy of the Government at home, are both insufficient to restrain the Americans They acquire no attachment to Place: But wandering about Seems ingrafted [*sic*] in their Nature; and it is a weakness incident to it, that they should ever imagine [*sic*] the Lands further off, are Still better than those upon which they are already settled.¹

Since most of the first settlers of what is now Tennessee came from the back country of Virginia and North Carolina, it is well to know something about the people of those areas. There were two waves of settlement during the eighteenth century: one from the so-called Tidewater regions of those and neighboring colonies, and the other from central Pennsylvania. Although a considerable number of the settlers were English, probably the larger proportion were non-English in nationality. Among those moving westward from the Tidewater

into the Piedmont region were a few French Protestants (Huguenots) who had found a refuge in the English colonies denied to them in the colonies of France. From Pennsylvania came larger numbers of Scotch-Irish and Germans. The Scotch-Irish, who might more accurately be called "Ulster-Scots," were Scotch people, mostly Presbyterians, who had been settled in northern Ireland (Ulster) during the reign of James I of England. Even while in Ireland they were described as "greedy after land," and they were intrigued by the glowing advertisements of rich land in Pennsylvania. Dissatisfied with their economic, political, and religious situation in Ireland, they moved in large numbers to William Penn's colony. When the price of land was raised in Pennsylvania, however, many of them moved again, this time southwestward into the back country of Virginia and North Carolina.* Moving in the same direction at about the same time were the Germans, most of whom had come to Pennsylvania** from the war-ravaged Rhine Valley region, known as the Palatinate. They represented various religious sects, but were also usually skilled farmers and mechanics and made important contributions to the life of the country. One unique group of Germans, of the Moravian sect, settled in the vicinity of the present Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and named their chief town Bethabara. Although they did not themselves move in any great numbers across the mountains into the West, the carefully-preserved records² of their settlement include references to other persons moving westward by way of Bethabara. Among the inhabitants of the back country there were people of still other nationalities, such as Welsh and Irish; but regardless of their differences, under the influence of the frontier environment the several groups were welded together into one people. They were self-reliant and democratic, but also aggressive and ruthless; occasionally they took the law into their own hands.³

Before the French and Indian War began the westward movement had progressed to the headwaters of the Holston River in southwestern Virginia not far from the present Tennessee line. The movement received some encouragement from the government as a means of forestalling occupation by the French. As early as 1745 James Patton, of Augusta County, Virginia, received a grant of 100,000 acres along the New and Holston rivers. He opened a land office and began selling land to actual settlers. Among the first to settle within his domain were Stephen Holston, after whom the river was named, and Samuel Stalnaker, whose settlement in 1750 has already been mentioned. In 1748 Patton, his son-in-law John Buchanan, Dr. Thomas Walker, and others came down the Holston as far as the site of Kingsport, Tennessee, locating lands for settlement. One of the

* East Tennessee, where many of these thrifty Scots later settled, still is characterized today, according to salesmen, by a very observable Scotch closeness.

** Some came directly, others by way of England and the colony of New York. Those who remained in the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania became known as "Pennsylvania Dutch," from the German word for German—"Deutsch."

surveys entered and recorded in the name of John Buchanan in the Virginia land office, on which a grant was made in 1753, was a tract which became known as "Sapling Grove" at the site of Bristol, Tennessee.⁴

The next year, 1749, there was organized the Loyal Land Company, of which Dr. Thomas Walker was the leading spirit, and it obtained from Virginia a grant of 800,000 acres upon "the Western waters," but north of the Virginia-North Carolina boundary. In 1750 Walker led an expedition which like that of 1748 came down the Holston to the "Long Island" at the site of Kingsport. While there he surveyed three tracts of land located in what is now Sullivan County, Tennessee, and upon his return he entered them in the name of his friend Edmund Pendleton, of Caroline County, Virginia. One of these entries became the basis of an actual grant of land to Pendleton in 1756 of 3,000 acres including the site of the present Kingsport, Tennessee.* That it was made, like the earlier one at Bristol, under Virginia rather than North Carolina authority was due to the fact that the boundary line between those two colonies—the 36° 30' parallel—had not at that time been surveyed farther west than the northeast corner of the present Tennessee at Steep Rock Creek.** The Walker expedition of 1750 continued westward from the Long Island across the Clinch River, which Walker named for "one Clinch a hunter," and on through the beautiful Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. Walker at first called this famous landmark Cave Gap, but ten years later he renamed it in honor of the Duke of Cumberland. Although not the first white man to see it, he was the first to record its discovery.⁵

The progress of the westward movement naturally was halted by the French and Indian War; that it was not renewed with increased force immediately after the ending of hostilities was due to the policy of the British government. Because of the lesson of the Cherokee War and because of the restlessness of other Indian tribes, the British authorities were determined to assure the natives that, despite the warnings given them by the French, their hunting grounds would not be settled without their freely-given consent. Plans were made for the marking of a definite Indian boundary line, but as a result of the uprising in 1763 of the Northern Indians which became known as Pontiac's Conspiracy, the government decided to make use of the watershed of the Appalachian Mountains as a temporary boundary. In the Proclamation of 1763 all settlement and granting of land west of that "Proclamation Line" was prohibited, except within the bounds of three new colonies on the mainland which were created by the same measure to include the most settled portions of the newly-acquired territory—

* This grant was eventually taken up in 1789 by his nephew Edmund Pendleton Gaines, who was later to become a prominent general in the United States army. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 167. Another grant was made on the same date (1756) to John Shelton. Price (ed.), "Two Petitions," 96 n.

** Mention was made in Chapter I that the survey of 1749, for which Peter Jefferson was one of the commissioners, stopped at that point.

East Florida, West Florida, and Quebec. Future purchases of land were to be made only by the colonial governors or the commander in chief in public meetings with all the Indian claimants. The task of marking and enforcing the Indian boundary line was given to the two superintendents of Indian affairs previously appointed, who were to work in cooperation with the governors under the direction of the commander in chief.⁶

In 1763 the two superintendents were Sir William Johnson, who had jurisdiction in the region north of the Ohio River, and John Stuart,* a survivor of the Fort Loudoun massacre, who was to deal with the Indians living south of the Ohio. By 1768 Stuart had obtained Cherokee agreement to an eastern boundary running from Reedy River in South Carolina by way of Tryon Mountain to Chiswell's Mine in southwestern Virginia, near the site of Wytheville. In that year, at the Treaty of Hard Labor, he obtained their consent to an extension of that boundary from Chiswell's Mine in a direct line to the junction of the Kanawha (now called New) River with the Ohio. Also in 1768 Sir William Johnson negotiated with the Iroquois the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, by which those Indians were permitted to relinquish all claims to the region south of the Ohio River as far west as the mouth of the Tennessee. In allowing the Iroquois to make that cession Johnson was ill-advised, for they had only the most shadowy claim to that territory, to which the Cherokee held a much superior title. Nevertheless, land speculators and prospective settlers naturally came to the conclusion that the Treaty of Fort Stanwix had opened to legal settlement all of southwest Virginia, West Virginia, and much of Kentucky and Tennessee. Such was not to be the case, however. At the Treaty of Lochaber in 1770 John Stuart, with the reluctant acquiescence of the governor of Virginia, confirmed the Cherokee title but obtained from those Indians an additional cession of land. The new line was to start where the Hard Labor line crossed the North Carolina-Virginia line (the 36° 30' parallel) and run due west to a point six miles east of the Long Island** of the Holston (Kingsport), thence to the Holston River and from there in a straight line to the mouth of the Kanawha. When this line was surveyed the next year by Alexander Cameron, Stuart's deputy among the Cherokee, John Donelson, as Virginia's representative, and a group of Indians including the Little Carpenter, the Cherokee agreed to two important modifications. When the surveying party reached the South Fork of the Holston, about ten miles east of Bristol, the Indians agreed to allow that river to be used as the boundary line instead of the 36°30' parallel because, as the Little Carpenter later explained, they found some white people already settled in that area, and he "pitied them."*** The other change agreed to was to have the line run from the point on the Holston (South Fork)

* Earlier in the same year he had been appointed to succeed Edmund Atkin, deceased.

** The Cherokee were especially desirous of retaining possession of this island.

*** This small portion of Tennessee (part of Sullivan County) was administered as part of Virginia until the North Carolina-Virginia line was surveyed in 1779.

six miles above the Long Island northwestward to the Kentucky River and along that stream to the Ohio instead of northward to the mouth of the Kanawha. For these additional cessions the Cherokee were promised an additional amount of goods worth 500 pounds, but this compensation was never made.⁷

The Long Hunters and the Land Companies—Meanwhile, since the close of the French and Indian War, the people of the back country of Virginia and North Carolina had been intrigued by the glowing reports of the richness of the lands lying west of the mountains, brought back to them by hunters, traders, and agents of land companies. As a consequence, the ban against settlement could not hold for long. The hunters were a peculiar breed, independent, inured to hardship, and unwilling to live "cooped up" in any civilized community. They remained hunting in the wilderness for such long periods of time that they were called "long hunters." One of the most famous was Daniel Boone, who was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1734 to a Quaker family. While Daniel was still in his "teens" they settled on the upper Yadkin River in what is now Davidson County, North Carolina. Because game was becoming scarce in the Piedmont, young Daniel began to extend his hunting expeditions ever farther to the west and by 1760 had found his way into East Tennessee. For many years there was standing in Washington County on the banks of Boone's Creek, a beech tree on which was inscribed: "D. Boon cilled a Bar on tree in the year 1760." This was one of many inscriptions he carved on trees, and this journey in 1760 was one of the first of many which this "Master of the Wilderness" made into the Tennessee and Kentucky country.⁸

In 1761 a party of eighteen or twenty hunters, led by Elisha Walden, came from Virginia into Tennessee. After hunting for months in what became known as Carter's Valley, west of the Holston, and along the Clinch and Powell rivers, they followed an Indian trail through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. While on this hunt they named the range of mountains lying west of the Clinch River Walden's (now Walden) Ridge in honor of their leader. During succeeding years Walden returned to upper East Tennessee with other groups of hunters. By 1766 the Cumberland Valley as well as the East Tennessee region was being explored. In that year a group of hunters from South Carolina, led by Isaac Lindsey, found at the junction of the Stones and Cumberland rivers two Pennsylvanians who had come by water from Fort Pitt (the site of Pittsburgh). They were James Harrod (later one of the first permanent settlers of Kentucky) and Michael Stoner. Stones River was named for Uriah Stone, a member of another party of Pennsylvanians led by Captain James Smith, which followed the Cumberland to its mouth and then explored the Tennessee River without finding any signs of white habitation in 1766 or 1768. It probably was the latter year because Smith's account,⁹ although giving the date 1766, gives as the occasion for the journey the news that Sir William

Johnson had purchased from the Indians "all the land west of the Appalachian Mountains, that lay between the Ohio and Cherokee [Tennessee] River," an obvious reference to the Treaty of Fort Stanwix of 1768.*

The glowing accounts brought back by Uriah Stone led to the organization of an especially large hunting party which assembled on the New River in June, 1769. After passing through Cumberland Gap and reaching the waters of the upper Cumberland River, the party broke up, as was the general custom, into small groups which radiated from station camps which were established for the purpose. One such camp was located on a creek in Sumner County, Tennessee, which still bears the name Station Camp Creek. From this camp Abram Bledsoe and Kasper Mansker led small groups in opposite directions along a buffalo trail, and each came upon a salt lick.** Such places were favorite hunting grounds, for the buffaloes and other animals came there to lick salt and were easy prey. According to the account left by William Hall, the ground around these licks were paved with buffalo bones. He learned from Isaac Bledsoe that a later party of hunters came to Bledsoe's Creek about four or five miles from the lick and discovered that

the Cane had grown up so thick in the woods that they thought they had mistaken the place until they Came to the Lick and saw what had been done One could walk for several hundred yards around the Lick and in the Lick on Buffelow [*sic*] Skuls [*sic*] and bones, and the whole flat around the Lick was bleached with Buffelow bones, and they found out the cause of the Canes growing up so suddenly . . . which was in Consequence of so many Buffelows being Killed.¹⁰

By 1768 or 1769 a new type of hunting had made its appearance, and the packing industry was begun in the Tennessee region. The trading house of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, of Philadelphia, employed Joseph Hollingshed to superintend the operations of the hunters and packers in the Tennessee and Kentucky country. Hollingshed's parties came up the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers in boats in the spring. While waiting for the cold season to arrive, when the buffalo beef and venison could be safely cured and casked, time was spent in gathering deerskins and rendering tallow from the fat buffalo. When cold weather arrived the meat from the deer and buffalo was packed in casks and sent to market either to New Orleans or to Fort Chartres in the Illinois country.***¹¹

* The treaty was not signed until November but reports that the Six Nations were going to "insist" on making such a cession were current as early as July, but hardly as early as 1766.

** Bledsoe's Lick and Mansker's Lick, respectively.

*** Also in 1768-69 Lieutenant Thomas Hutchins, an engineer stationed at Fort Chartres, made surveys of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. Williams, *Dawn*, 304-10; *Early Travels*, 221-26.

All of this hunting and exploring was possible only because there were no Indian towns in the region. But not only the Cherokee but also several other tribes, including some from north of the Ohio River, were engaged in hunting in the area. They naturally resented the competition of the white hunters, which threatened to reduce materially their profits from their own dealings with white traders. If they should happen to come upon a party of white hunters they occasionally would kill them, but more frequently merely deprived them of their ammunition, food, and any deerskins they might have accumulated. Robert Crockett, who was on the "great hunt" of 1769, was killed in what is now Overton County, Tennessee. The same year a party of former soldiers, including Gilbert and Robert Christian, came to the Holston region hunting and spying out the land. An Indian raid deprived them of most of their flour and ammunition, and they deferred their plans of settlement until later. In 1770 a detachment of a large hunting party led by Henry Scaggs and Joseph Drake was attacked by Indians and two hunters were captured or killed. The survivors carved on a tree the extent of the plunder: "2300 Deer Skins lost Ruination by God."¹²

The long hunters frequently served also as agents of land companies in locating good lands for settlement. As early as 1764 the impecunious Daniel Boone was working in such a capacity for his lawyer friend and creditor, Richard Henderson, a judge of the North Carolina court in his district. Soon Henry Scaggs was employed in a similar manner. It was the reports of these two hunters and their consistent urging which eventually led the Judge to organize the land company which purchased an immense tract of land in Kentucky and Middle Tennessee from the Indians in 1775. The Loyal Land Company in 1763 petitioned Virginia for a renewal of its patent, but it was denied. Nevertheless, the company began to sell the lands on a large scale, and the hunters undoubtedly were helpful in locating and surveying the land, some of which as has been previously mentioned lay south of the unmarked Virginia-North Carolina line. Many Virginia soldiers of the French and Indian War also held warrants entitling them to western lands as military bounties, and the Proclamation of 1763 was somewhat indefinite as to whether or not it was legal to locate and survey those lands. Groups of soldiers were busily engaged in locating such tracts long before the Virginia legislature yielded to the inevitable in 1773 and authorized settlers to purchase lands either from soldiers or from the Loyal or Greenbrier land companies.¹³

The First Settlements—The first permanent settlers in what is now Tennessee came mainly from the back country of Virginia and North Carolina. The migration from the former was largely the result of a gradual pushing of settlement down the Holston Valley across the unmarked boundary between these two colonies. Some of the earliest settlers, however, came from farther east in Virginia, particularly from Pittsylvania County, just across the boundary from North Car-

olina's Orange (later Wake) County, scene of much of the activity of the "Regulators."* The motivating forces included a venturesome spirit, the lure of the western lands, and the erroneous belief that the Treaties of Hard Labor and Fort Stanwix of October and November, 1768, had opened those lands to legal settlement. Evidence of the movement down the Holston Valley is provided by the testimony of a party of hunters, led by Gilbert Christian, which came down the valley late in 1768 and found no settlers except three families at the headsprings of the Holston. On their return journey in February, 1769, beginning about twenty or thirty miles northeast of the site of Kingsport, they found "a cabin on every spot where the range was good."¹⁴ How many other cabins they missed—including some within the bounds of present Tennessee—because they were hidden away for safety on branches of the Holston rather than being near the main stream, is unknown. One such cabin was built on Boone's Creek near its junction with the Watauga River, probably early in 1769, by William Bean, traditionally the first permanent white settler** in what is now Tennessee. He had come from Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and presumably had cleared his land the preceding year. He was soon joined by several of his relatives and neighbors. Thus his work as a colonizer transcends in importance his alleged priority in time.¹⁵

Also settling along the Watauga River at about the same time were a number of North Carolinians who lived not far from Bean's old home in Pittsylvania, but on the other side of the colonial boundary, in Orange and neighboring counties of North Carolina. In moving westward they appear to have hoped that they were settling far enough up the Holston Valley to be in the province of Virginia as well as on land which had been cleared of Indian title by the treaties of 1768. In both respects, as they later discovered, they were wrong. But why did they wish to leave North Carolina? One reason was their dissatisfaction with the situation prevailing in the section of that colony known as the Granville District.

* To be described later.

** As explained by Williams (*Dawn*, 338 n.), "Few problems in the history of Tennessee baffle one more than that of first settlement. Few records were left by the pioneers to aid; and it is not easy to determine when one passed from the status of 'trader' or 'hunter' to that of 'settler' or who was a temporary settler as distinguished from a permanent one." For example, he holds that Andrew Greer and Julius Dugger, mentioned by Ramsey (*Annals*, 140-42) as traders who came west as early as 1766 "and are believed to be the first white men that settled south of the Virginia line," probably did not become permanent settlers prior to 1770. *Dawn*, 348. Oliver Taylor, *Historic Sullivan* (Bristol, 1909), 23, says that in the spring of 1765 John Sharp, Thomas Sharp, and Thomas Henderson came from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to the banks of the Holston in what is now Sullivan County, Tennessee, raised a crop of corn and brought in their families the next year. If they were still there in 1769, it is strange that the Christian party did not see them, and the Taylor statement cannot be otherwise substantiated. His chief source, the Deery manuscript, has been shown by Williams to be highly unreliable.

When, in 1729, seven of the eight original proprietors of the Carolina grant sold their interests to the Crown, the eighth proprietor, John, Lord Carteret, the first Earl of Granville, refused to sell. He therefore was permitted to retain the property rights to his eighth share of the grant, while relinquishing governmental authority. This Granville District as laid out some years later included all of North Carolina between the Virginia line and the 35° 34' parallel as far west as the North Carolina claim extended, which after 1763 was to the Mississippi River. Thus the District included about one-half of the present state of North Carolina and an even larger proportion of the present Tennessee—the entire area north of a line which would run near the present towns of Sweetwater in East Tennessee and Covington in West Tennessee.* Lord Granville never came to North Carolina but allowed his property to be administered by “agents” who were notoriously corrupt. They charged extortionate fees, sometimes sold the same tract of land to as many as three different parties, and allowed the settled area to become a haven for outlaws and other despicable characters. Payments for land had to be made in gold or silver, which was scarce on the frontier. It is no wonder that many of the settlers on Granville’s lands wished to move out from under his jurisdiction.¹⁶

Dissatisfaction with government under North Carolina also contributed to the desire to move. The western counties were discriminated against in regard to representation in the colonial assembly but were at the same time subjected to heavy taxation. The taxes were increased in the late 1760’s to provide the funds for the building of “Tryon’s Palace,” an elegant mansion for the current governor. Local government was undemocratic and corrupt, characterized by courthouse “rings” and a pernicious fee system. It was difficult to get justice in the courts, and the aroused citizenry, calling themselves “Regulators,” eventually took the law into their own hands. They broke up several courts, including one presided over by Richard Henderson, and subjected some corrupt officials to mob treatment. Governor William Tryon determined to put down the Regulators by force. He led an army into the western counties and defeated the ill-equipped Regulators at Alamance in May, 1771, and forced them to submit to royal authority.^{**17}

Although one prominent historian¹⁸ contends that very few if any of the Regulators moved into the Tennessee country, there is no doubt, as even this historian admits, that some people of “regulating principles” did so before the

* The fact that the only land in the Tennessee country owned by North Carolina rather than Lord Granville included on its eastern edge the actual homes of the Cherokee Indians and therefore could not be open to white settlement for many years was a major factor behind North Carolina’s long delay in expressing interest in its western claim.

** A similar Regulation movement arose in western South Carolina, but it did not reach warlike proportions.

Battle of Alamance; and it is very probable that the migration continued after that engagement.* As early as August, 1768, the Moravians at Bethabara recorded that

the Regulators' matter seems to be at a very critical point, and there may be dangerous developments. . . . A party of men from Orange County passed through our village. They were Regulators, and said they were going to Holston River to look for land.

Two years later, September 21, 1770, they recorded: "There were unusually many strangers in our town today, especially a number who do not wish to be under the law, and are moving to Holston River."¹⁹

Among the Orange Countians who were identified with the Regulators and who visited the Tennessee country before the Battle of Alamance was James Robertson, who has been called by historians both the "Father of Tennessee" and the "Father of Middle Tennessee." Born in Brunswick County, Virginia, in 1742, of Scotch-Irish ancestry, he has been described as "quiet, reflective, conservative, wise, a firm believer in the basic principles of civil liberty and the right of local self-government."²⁰ While on a journey westward looking for a place to settle, probably in the spring of 1770, he was entertained for some time in the home of John Honeycut on the Watauga River. Considering the Watauga Old Field,** near the site of Elizabethton, to be a "Promised Land," he planted there a field of corn. After "laying by" this crop in August, he began his return journey. During a period of heavy rains he became lost in the mountains and was forced to abandon his horse. After days of wandering, and close to starvation, he finally came upon two hunters who supplied him with food and enabled him to find his way to his home on the Yadkin River. Despite his narrow escape from death, he moved his family to the Watauga Valley, in company with several families of his neighbors, immediately after participating in the Battle of Alamance. Included in the group, or following soon after, were James's brother Charles and his cousin, also named Charles, John Donelson, and John Cotten. Donelson, the second son of the Virginia John Donelson, had moved to North Carolina in 1760. He induced Cotten, an officer in Tryon's army, to change sides before the battle. Later, they both helped Robertson in the founding of Nashville.²¹

In 1770 two Virginians, John Carter and William*** Parker, established a store

* Morgan Edwards, who visited the area of the Regulation movement in 1772, gathering material for a history of the Baptist church, stated in his history: "It is said that 1500 families departed since the battle of the Alamance." Quoted in Williams, *Dawn*, 146. Williams, however, admits that "over-estimate and over-emphasis have been placed on the Regulators' contribution to the early settlements [by Ramsey, Putnam, and others]." *Ibid.*, 378 n.

** A region previously used and cleared by Indians.

*** Williams, *Dawn*, 348, and others give the first name as Joseph, but Prentis Price (ed.), "Two Petitions," 96 n., concludes from the use of the name on a tax list of 1779 that it was William.

in what later became known as Carter's Valley west of the Holston River near the present Church Hill in Hawkins County. Their purpose was to trade with Indians out on their hunts and also to supply provisions to white settlers on their way to Natchez on the Mississippi River. It was the custom of many of the numerous travelers to what was then English West Florida to stop somewhere along the upper Holston and raise a crop of corn. After getting additional supplies from Carter and Parker, to whom they would also turn over their preemption rights to the land they had cultivated, they would resume their journey. The Cherokee Indians, however, objected to the presence on their lands of Carter and Parker, especially after the survey of the Cameron-Donelson line in 1771, and told Superintendent Stuart that if they wished to trade with the Indians they should do so at their towns. Carter moved his family to Watauga for greater safety, leaving Parker in charge, but the store was soon robbed by the Indians and abandoned.

Meanwhile, a settlement had been made on the Nolichucky River near the site of Erwin in Unicoi County. The first settler there, probably arriving in 1768, was a North Carolina Regulator named John Ryan. "Sometime in the year 1771" he sold his preemption claim to Jacob Brown and returned to Orange County. Other Regulators, however, soon joined Brown on the Nolichucky, believing that they were within the province of Virginia. When the survey of 1771 revealed that they were still in North Carolina and also on Indian land, they moved temporarily to Watauga.²²

A fourth area of settlement was developed north of the South Fork of the Holston in the neighborhood of the present Bristol. As mentioned above, apparently there were settlers in that region as early as 1771, for the Little Carpenter gave that as the reason for the Indians' consent during the Cameron-Donelson survey to a modification of the Lochaber line so that it would follow the river instead of the 36° 30' parallel. Evan Shelby of Frederick County, Maryland, pressed by his debts, had visited the area in 1770 looking for a place to settle. By 1772 he had established a store at Sapling Grove (Bristol) with his son Isaac.* Probably about a year later he brought his whole family to the region, which was the beginning of a little settlement on both sides of the then unmarked present boundary between Tennessee and Virginia which runs down the main street of Bristol. In 1773 he acquired from John Cox possessory rights to a part of the old Buchanan grant of 1753 and ten years later he acquired title to the grant itself. It is possible, according to Williams, that he also acquired title to his lands from Lord Granville. Among the customers of his store in 1772 were Daniel Boone, who apparently was living in the Sapling Grove region at that time, and Valentine Sevier, the father of John Sevier, James and Charles Robertson, William Williams, John Cox, and William Bean.²³

* Isaac Shelby later became governor of Kentucky.



Franklin—"Carter House"

Not only Valentine Sevier but also his more famous son John lived for a time, before moving to Watauga, in the north of the Holston area. He visited the region and also Watauga in 1771 and 1772, and moved with his family to the Keywood settlement on the north bank of the Holston about Christmas day, 1773. The move to the Watauga settlement appears to have been made during the summer of 1775. This future governor of the state of Franklin and of Tennessee was of French-English descent, his grandfather, a French Huguenot having fled to England* and married an English girl. His father, Valentine, came to America about 1740 and settled in the Shenandoah Valley, where John was born September 23, 1745. Although he married Sarah Hawkins at the early age of sixteen, he obtained a fair education and became a respected citizen and a captain in the colonial militia. His roving disposition brought him to the Tennessee country, where he was able to exercise his talents for leadership.²⁴

* Here he Anglicized his name Xavier to Sevier.

The Watauga Association—By 1771 there were four areas of settlement in what is now the northeastern corner of Tennessee. When the Cameron-Donelson line was surveyed that year, it was found that only the settlement north of the Holston was outside the newly-defined Indian country. The other three were located on Indian land. As mentioned above, the Carter store was abandoned temporarily after it had been robbed by the Indians. Both the Watauga and the Nolichucky groups of settlers were ordered by Superintendent Stuart's deputy, Alexander Cameron, to move out of the Indian country, and Jacob Brown and his neighbors moved from the Nolichucky to the Watauga. Most of the Wataugans, however, and Jacob Brown also, decided to deal directly with the Cherokee Indians. As explained in their petition to North Carolina of 1776,

... to their great disappointment, when the line was run they were (contrary to their expectation) left out; . . . and being too inconveniently situated to move back, and feeling an unwillingness to loose [*sic*] the labour bestowed on their plantations, they applied to the Cherokee Indians, and leased the land for a term of ten years²⁵

Moses Fisk, Tennessee's earliest historian (a forerunner of Haywood), writing in 1816 from interviews with the first settlers, gives the impression that the Cherokee were quite willing to allow the trespassers to remain, "provided they would make no further encroachments." He is also the authority for the information that James Robertson and John Bean* negotiated the lease for the Wataugans by which they became "tenants at will" of Indian landlords, and that Jacob Brown was quite helpful in making the arrangement with the Indians, since he had been "ingratiating himself into their favor" by supplying them with goods at a store he had kept on the Nolichucky.²⁶ According to Brown's own account, in his petition of 1776 to North Carolina,

although much solicited by the Indians of the Cherokee Nation to remain on his settlement, yet did remove himself with much trouble and disadvantage to Wataugaw [*sic*], where he remained until the Chief of the said Nation by very pressing intreaty [*sic*] and great Incouragement [*sic*] prevailed on him to return to his settlement whither a considerable Body of Indians of the aforesaid Nation escorted your petitioner and assisted him in removing his Effects²⁷

The Cherokee version of the event is quite different:

... when Mr. Cameron ran the line of Virginia there were people who

* Haywood in following this account was guilty of a typographical error and transcribed Bean as Boon, an error which was copied by many other writers. The error was noted by Albert V. Goodpasture, "Watauga Association," *American Historical Magazine*, III (April, 1898), 103-20, and later by Williams, *Dawn*, 369 n. Both Fisk and Haywood say the lease was for eight years.

had set themselves down on this side of the Boundary Line; they were ordered to remove off but they begged as their crops were then on the ground they might be allowed to reap them and that they would certainly remove the spring following; some of them went away but others and more people came in their room; they at last brought goods and prevailed on some of their people to give leases; that many of them [the Indians] were against their staying on the land, But that the people who brought the goods told them that they would stay on the land whether they took the goods or not²⁸

In contrast to the situation of the North Holston settlement, the settlers on the Watauga and the Nolichucky faced also the problem of providing for some form of government. Until the Virginia-North Carolina line was surveyed in 1779, the settlers north of the Holston were considered to be in Virginia and were attached to the most western county* of that colony. This was not possible for the people located south of that temporary boundary; and as North Carolina made no provision for the extension beyond the mountains of the jurisdiction of its westernmost counties, the settlers on the Watauga and Nolichucky were outside the bounds of any organized government. Their situation was similar to that of the Pilgrims who signed the Mayflower Compact in 1620 off Plymouth Rock. In a similar way and for a similar reason the Wataugans created a homespun government called the Watauga Association. Unfortunately, the Compact, signed on May 8, 1772, has been lost, but the government was described in a petition the Wataugans sent to North Carolina in 1776:

Finding ourselves on the Frontiers, and being apprehensive that, for want of a proper legislature, we might become a shelter for such as endeavoured to defraud their creditors; considering also the necessity of recording Deeds, Wills, and doing other public business; we, by consent of the people, formed a court for the purposes above mentioned, taking (by desire of our constituents) the Virginia laws for our guide, so near as our situation would admit; this was intended for ourselves, and was done by the consent of every individual. . . .²⁹

The government appears to have consisted of a court of five members, a sheriff, and a clerk.** The court exercised both legislative and judicial powers. According to Williams, the first five judges were John Carter, who it will be

* In 1771 Botetourt, later Fincastle, and finally Washington, as Virginia counties were subdivided.

** Ramsey, *Annals*, 107, confusing this government with the later Washington District, says there were thirteen commissioners elected who in turn selected the five judges. Goodpasture, "Watauga Association," 114-15, corrected this error. See also Williams, *Dawn*, 372.

recalled had moved from Carter's Valley to Watauga and probably was the first chairman of the court; James Robertson, also an influential member; his cousin Charles Robertson, "a man of probity and sound judgment," Zachariah Isbell, who had previously served as a magistrate in Bedford County, Virginia, and Craven County, North Carolina; and Jacob Brown,* who was temporarily living on the Watauga before moving back to the Nolichucky, at which time he probably resigned from the court. Probably the first clerk** was James Smith, one of the long hunters of the 1760's, who had come to Watauga from North Carolina. He was succeeded by John Sevier in 1775; and when Sevier became a member of the court, it is probable that Felix Walker was elected clerk. The name of the first sheriff is unknown, but a later one possibly was Valentine Sevier, who preceded his son John in coming to the Watauga country.³⁰

Contemporary observers and some later writers exaggerated the significance of the Watauga Compact. The governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, writing in 1774 about the tendency of settlers beyond the bounds of government to govern themselves, said of the Wataugans:

In effect we have an example of the very case, there being actually a set of People in the back part of the colony [*sic*] bordering on the Cherokee Country, who finding they could not obtain titles to the Land they fancied, under any of the neighbouring Governments, have settled upon it without, and contented themselves with becoming in a manner tributary to the Indians, and have appointed Magistrates and framed Laws for their present occasions and to all intents and purposes erected themselves into an inconsiderable yet a Separate State, the Consequences of which may prove hereafter detrimental to the peace and security of the other Colonies; it, at least, Sets a dangerous example to the people of America of forming governments distinct from and independent of His Majesty's Authority.³¹

Actually, as has been pointed out, the Wataugans were not in the back part of Virginia, and they appear to have had no intention of forming any separate or independent state. Beyond the bounds of the government of North Carolina and in the Indian country, they designed their government to meet a particular emergency and recognized its temporary character. As they explained in their petition of 1776, they limited considerably the criminal jurisdiction of their court regarding non-residents, "lest we should in any way intrude on the legislature of

* Ramsey, again confusing this court with Washington District Committee of Thirteen, gives John Sevier as the fifth judge. This is hardly likely, for although Sevier may have visited Watauga in 1772, he did not move to the Tennessee country until late in 1773 and then resided until 1775 in North Holston settlement.

** Ramsey, *Annals*, 107, says William Tatham, but Tatham did not arrive until 1776. Williams, *Dawn*, 372 n.

the colonies." Also somewhat extreme is the statement of Theodore Roosevelt in which, after claiming that the making of treaties with the Indians was a "distinct exercise of the right of sovereignty," he continues:

... In fact the dwellers, in this little out-lying frontier commonwealth, exercised the rights of full statehood for a number of years; establishing in true American style a purely democratic government with representative institutions, in which, under certain restrictions, the will of the majority was supreme.

Still it probably is true that, as Williams expressed it:

The influence of the Watauga Association has been great in molding governmental affairs in Tennessee in after years. The spirit of independence and self-aid exhibited in its formation, and by its proceedings, indeed set the keynote for all later generations of Tennesseans, as the history of that Commonwealth amply demonstrates.³²

Dunmore's War and the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals—For several years the Wataugans lived in relative peace with their neighbors, the Cherokee, even though they were living only about a hundred miles away. In 1774, however, there occurred an incident which almost disrupted this peace. Several Cherokee Indians attended a horse race at Watauga and one of them was killed by a Virginian named William (or Isaac) Crabtree. James Robertson undertook a journey to the Cherokee towns in an effort to pacify the Indians who at first appeared intent upon retaliation. Although his life was threatened by the young braves, Robertson was saved by the older warriors and succeeded in accomplishing his mission. He was aided, apparently, by the negotiations of Governor Dunmore of Virginia which induced the Cherokee to agree to execute (which they failed to do) two warriors who had been involved in murders in Virginia. Among the victims was a son (James) of Daniel Boone and another probably was a relative of Crabtree, which was the incitement for his senseless killing at Watauga.³³ The situation was extremely critical, for the Cherokee had repeatedly protested to the British superintendent of Indian affairs about the Wataugan encroachments on their lands, even though they had voluntarily leased those lands to the whites. Superintendent Stuart on February 22, 1774, wrote Governor Josiah Martin asking him to prevail on those settlers to move; and Martin issued a proclamation ordering them to retire from the Indian territory or expect no protection from the British government. The settlers on the Watauga and Nolichucky, depending on their leases, still refused to move.³⁴

Another complication was the contact between the Cherokee and the Northern Indians along the Ohio, who were becoming restless because of the encroachments of Virginians and Pennsylvanians upon their lands and because of the large number of surveyors with their compasses, called "land stealers" by

the Indians, engaged in locating lands for soldiers of the French and Indian War. Daniel Boone and other North Carolinians late in 1773 attempted to establish a settlement in Kentucky, but after the torture and murder of James Boone the attempt was abandoned. Settlers in the Clinch Valley of southwestern Virginia moved back east as far as the Holston. As the war between Virginia and the Indians of the Ohio River region, called Dunmore's War,* approached, several forts were built on the frontier, and there was considerable apprehension that the Cherokee might join the Northern Indians in the war. Three or four of the forts were on what is now Tennessee soil. Two were in the neighborhood of the present Kingsport, where by 1774 some beginnings of settlement had been made. One was King's Mill Fort, across the Holston from the southern end of the Long Island on land recently occupied by Gilbert Christian; the other, called Eaton's Station, was six miles to the east. A third fort was in the Sapling Grove settlement at the site of Bristol and was named in honor of Captain Evan Shelby.

When General Andrew Lewis began his march to the Ohio, where he met and defeated the Indians at Point Pleasant in October, 1774, Captain Shelby organized a company to participate in the campaign. Included in his company, along with North Holston settlers, were several Wataugans, including James Robertson and Valentine Sevier. While the men were away on this campaign, the settlements in the Holston Valley, near Kingsport and Bristol, were subjected to Indian raids which caused numerous casualties. It was thought at first that the raiders were Cherokee, and messengers, including John Carter of Watauga, were sent to the Cherokee towns to work for peace. It was later discovered that the raids were made by Northern Indians under the leadership of Chief Logan, a half-breed Mingo who had been enraged by the massacre of his family by some Virginians on the eve of Dunmore's War. He had attempted to arouse the Cherokee but had been unable to do so.³⁵

The crushing of the Northern Indians at Point Pleasant not only paved the way for land speculation and westward settlement by Virginians but also led Judge Richard Henderson of North Carolina to put into operation his developing plans to establish a colony west of the mountains on land to be purchased privately from the Cherokee Indians. Such a project had been in his mind for several years and, as previously mentioned, he had employed Daniel Boone and other long hunters to spy out the land for him. By August of 1774 Henderson was at length ready to move and organized at Hillsboro the Louisa Company, made up of five North Carolinians including himself. Their purpose was to buy from the Cherokee an immense tract of land in Kentucky and Tennessee; and in the autumn Henderson and another member of the company named Na-

* It is probable that the war was in part provoked by Governor Dunmore in the expectation that the crushing of the Ohio River Indians would open up opportunities of expansion to the land speculating companies in which he was interested. Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 211.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

Chattanooga—Chickamauga Lake

thaniel Hart passed through the Watauga settlement on their way to the Cherokee towns to discuss the matter with them. The chiefs delegated the Little Carpenter, another chief, and a squaw to go to Cross Creek (Fayetteville, North Carolina) to see the goods with which the company proposed to pay for the land. Their passage to and from Cross Creek was noted in the records kept by the Moravians at Bethabara under the dates of November 23, 1774, and January 9, 1775. On the return journey they were accompanied by Henderson and six wagon loads of goods to be taken to Sycamore Shoals (between Elizabethton and Johnson City, Tennessee), where the treaty conference was to be held in March. Meanwhile, the

company had been reorganized on January 6 with new members and a new name—Transylvania Company.

Attending the treaty conference were about 1,200 Indians and about half as many whites, which was quite a boon to the Wataugans, who were able to dispose of their surplus food in feeding the throng. At the beginning of the negotiations, on March 14, the Indians proposed to sell to the company merely the land between the Sandy and Kentucky rivers, roughly the land which Cameron and Donelson had bargained for when they surveyed and modified the Lochaber Treaty line in 1771—land for which the Virginians were supposed to give the Indians 500 pounds worth of goods, which had not been done. Henderson refused to deal for that land and insisted that the original, though tentative, agreement be adhered to—the sale of the whole country between the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers. This statement was the occasion for an impassioned “talk” by a young chief named Dragging Canoe, who protested against the whole proceeding and warned his fellow Cherokee that by selling so much of their land, which would be followed by demands for more, they were paving the way toward the extinction of the whole race. The next day, however, the older chiefs were again in control and expressed their willingness to proceed. Henderson then proposed to add two thousand pounds worth of goods if the purchase should include all the land watered by the Cumberland and its tributaries. Had this change not been agreed to the purchase would not have included the site of Nashville, which was to be the location of one of the settlements sponsored by the Transylvania Company. The next day, March 19, the treaty was signed with elaborate ceremony, and for about ten thousand pounds worth of goods the company had acquired about twenty million acres of land in Kentucky and Tennessee. As this deed was done, Dragging Canoe pointed to the west and declared dramatically that a dark cloud hung over that land, known as the “Bloody Grounds.”

The Wataugans were interested spectators at this treaty negotiated in the midst of their settlement. Three years before, knowing that the Proclamation of 1763 and other British laws prohibited private purchase of land from the Indians, they had merely leased from the Cherokee the lands they were occupying. If a big land company was willing to flout the law,* and since the Indians were in a mood to sell, they saw no reason why they should not try to transform their lease into an outright purchase. Accordingly, Charles Robertson signed a deed by which in exchange for two thousand pounds he acquired title, as trustee for the Association, to a tract of land somewhat larger than the area previously leased.

* Henderson claimed that the so-called Camden-Yorke opinion handed down by law officers of the Crown, declaring legal private purchase of lands from native Indians, legalized his proceeding. Archibald Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 201-03. That opinion, however, referred to the Indians of India and not North American Indians, and its applicability to the Sycamore Shoals purchase was very doubtful. W. S. Lester, *The Transylvania Colony* (Spencer, Ind., 1935), 26-28.

The line was to run from the Holston River at a point six miles above the Long Island to the ridge dividing the waters of the Watauga from those of the Nolichucky, along that ridge to the Blue Ridge Mountains or the line dividing North Carolina from Cherokee lands, along the crest of that mountain to the Virginia line, along that line to the Holston, and down the Holston to the point of beginning. It is of interest to note that this purchase included a considerable section of the present northwestern North Carolina.

Immediately after this purchase had been concluded Judge Henderson negotiated another bargain with the Cherokee which involved John Carter and Carter's Valley. This was his "Path deed." Explaining that he did not wish to walk on the Cherokee land to get to the purchase he had already made, he induced the Indians to sell to the company for some additional goods a tract of land connecting that purchase with the land just acquired by the Wataugans and the Donelson line of 1771. This area included Carter's Valley west of the Holston, which in accordance with a prior arrangement was turned over to John Carter and a new partner named Robert Lucas. These partners immediately began to convey Carter's Valley lands to persons interested in establishing homes in that region. Jacob Brown also made two purchases of land in Nolichucky Valley adjoining the Watauga purchase and covering a larger area than his lease, although it did not, like the Watauga purchase, extend into the present North Carolina.*

Before the treaties were concluded, Henderson sent Daniel Boone and a party of axe-wielders to mark a trail (later called the Wilderness Road) through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky; and he followed a little later with a group of settlers who began the organized settlement of the Kentucky country. The story of that settlement is not a part of Tennessee history, but the refusal of Virginia to recognize the company's title to Kentucky land was later instrumental in diverting Henderson's attention to the Tennessee portion of his purchase. Meanwhile, the outbreak of hostilities in the Revolutionary War at Lexington, Massachusetts, exactly one month after the treaties of Sycamore Shoals were signed, served to render innocuous the fulminations of Superintendent Stuart and the royal governors of Virginia and North Carolina against those "illegal" proceedings. This event, as will be shown in the next chapter, was to give the Indians an opportunity to repudiate the bargains they had made.³⁶

* Among the signers for the Indians of the several deeds to Henderson, Robertson, and Brown were Oconostota and Attakullakulla, the leading chieftains of the Cherokee Nation.

CHAPTER V —NOTES

1. Quoted in Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 64.
2. Adelaide L. Fries (ed.), *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (8 vols., Raleigh, 1922-54).
3. Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 122-57; Henderson, *Conquest of the Old*

- Southwest*, 19-39; Constance L. Skinner, *Pioneers of the Old Southwest* (New Haven, 1919), 1-51; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 59-60; Hugh T. Lefler, *History of North Carolina* (2 vols., New York, 1956), I, 93-101; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 24-42.
4. Samuel C. Williams, "Stephen Holston and Holston River," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 26-27. Prentiss Price (ed.), "Two Petitions to Virginia of the North of Holston Men, 1776, 1777," *ibid.*, No. 21 (1949), 95, 96 n.
 5. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 165-74. This includes an extended excerpt from Dr. Walker's "Journal."
 6. The origins of the Proclamation of 1763 are well described in Clarence W. Alvord, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics* (2 vols., Cleveland, 1916-17), I, 157-210. But see also Alden, *John Stuart*, 140-42, 241-42; Henry Steele Commager (ed.), *Documents of American History* (2 vols., New York, 1942), I, 47-50.
 7. Alden, *John Stuart*, 221, 262-85; Williams, *Dawn*, 296-303, 355-61. Williams shows clearly that the statement of Ramsey, *Annals*, 76, following John Haywood, *Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1823; reprinted, 1891), that the Cherokee had admitted that the Iroquois had a valid claim south of the Ohio is completely erroneous.
 8. John Bakeless, *Master of the Wilderness: Daniel Boone* (New York, 1939), 1-33. Contrary to the skepticism of some other writers, this excellent biographer of Boone accepts as authentic most of the Boone carvings, particularly the one on Boone's Creek since it was observed as early as 1770 and accepted as genuine by Ramsey, *Annals*, 67, in 1853. See also Williams, *Dawn*, 319-20; Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 130-43.
 9. *Account of Remarkable Occurrence* (Lexington, Ky., 1799), reprinted in Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 203-07.
 10. Quoted in Williams, *Dawn*, 330, from Draper Manuscripts, 6XX8, 114. The Draper Manuscripts are a mass of source material, including letters and reminiscences of pioneers, invaluable for the study of the early history of Tennessee and other parts of the Old Southwest. They were collected by Lyman Copeland Draper on his many journeys through the region both before and after the Civil War and deposited in the library of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison. Transcripts and microfilm copies of these papers are available in several Tennessee libraries, including Tennessee State Library and University of Tennessee. An excellent biography of Draper is William B. Hesseltine, *Pioneer's Mission: The Story of Lyman Copeland Draper* (Madison, Wis., 1954).
 11. Williams, *Dawn*, 326-27.
 12. *Ibid.*, 322-29; Bakeless, *Daniel Boone*, 47-56; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 64-65. For other general accounts of the long hunters see Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 158-81; Ramsey, *Annals*, 67-70, 94-97; Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 116-29; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 64-82.
 13. *Ibid.*, 104-15; Bakeless, *Daniel Boone*, 36-37, 46-48; Alden, *John Stuart*, 273; Thomas P. Abernethy, *Western Lands and the American Revolution* (New York, 1937), 89-90.
 14. Williams, *Dawn*, 335-36; Ramsey, *Annals*, 93-94.
 15. *Ibid.*, 94; Williams, *Dawn*, 338-39.
 16. *Ibid.*, 311-14; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I, 167-71; E. Merton Coulter, "The Granville District," *James Sprunt Historical Papers*, XIII, No. 1 (Chapel Hill, 1913), 5-56.
 17. Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 160-74; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I,

- 188-99. This author, citing R. O. DeMond, *The Loyalists in North Carolina During the Revolution* (Durham, 1940), disagrees with the position of John Spencer Bassett, "The Regulators of North Carolina," *American Historical Association, Annual Report*, 1894 (Washington, 1895), 141-212, that most of the Regulators became Tories during the Revolution. Of 883 known Regulators 289 were Patriots, 34 Tories, and for the remaining 560 their Revolutionary status is unknown.
18. Thomas P. Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, 1932), 7-8.
 19. Williams, *Dawn*, 337-43, citing Fries (ed.), *Moravian Records*, I, 379, 415.
 20. Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 188-89.
 21. *Ibid.*, 189-90; Williams, *Dawn*, 340-45; V. H. Paltsits, "James Robertson," in *Dictionary of American Biography* (20 vols. and supplements, New York, 1928-), 24-25; J. W. L. Matlock (ed.), "The Battle of the Bluffs, From the Journal of John Cotten," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (September, 1959), 252-54. There is some disagreement as to the date of Robertson's first visit to Watauga. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 66, gives 1768; Ramsey, *Annals*, 664, says 1769. Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 206, following A. W. Putnam, *History of Middle Tennessee: The Life and Times of James Robertson* (Nashville, 1859), 24, says he moved with his family after Alamance. The Cotten Journal (in possession of the Reverend J. W. L. Matlock, Hendersonville, Tenn.) confirms this and also his participation in the battle. Matlock to S. J. Folmsbee, March 3, 15, 1960.
 22. Williams, *Dawn*, 348-51, 365, 367.
 23. *Ibid.*, 351-53; Bakeless, *Daniel Boone*, 66.
 24. Carl Driver, *John Sevier: Pioneer of the Old Southwest* (Chapel Hill, 1932), 1-8; Williams, *Dawn*, 353-54.
 25. *Ibid.*, 364-66; Ramsey, *Annals*, 135.
 26. Moses Fisk, "A Summary Notice of the First Settlements Made by White People within the Limits of Tennessee," reprinted with an introduction by A. V. Goodpasture from *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, VII, in *American Historical Magazine*, II (January, 1897), 17-26.
 27. Quoted in Williams, *Dawn*, 365, from *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, X, 885-87.
 28. Quoted in Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 68.
 29. Ramsey, *Annals*, 136. Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 211, without citing any authority, gives the date as 1772. He also calls it the first written constitution "adopted west of the mountains, or by a community composed of American-born freemen." The date of the signing, May 8, 1772, is given in the Cotten Journal. Telegram, Matlock to S. J. Folmsbee, May 20, 1960.
 30. Williams, *Dawn*, 372-77.
 31. Quoted in Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 68-69; also in Williams, *Dawn*, 371, citing Bancroft, *History*, VI, 401.
 32. Ramsey, *Annals*, 136; Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 213; Williams, *Dawn*, 377.
 33. *Ibid.*, 386-90; Bakeless, *Daniel Boone*, 73-74. According to Williams, Crabtree's first name was William; Bakeless gives it as Isaac. Haywood and Ramsey give the date erroneously as 1772.
 34. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 69-70; Williams, *Dawn*, 385-86.
 35. *Ibid.*, 390-400. Other contributions of Williams on this subject are "Shelby's Fort," previously cited, and "The First Volunteers From the 'Volunteer State,'" *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, VIII (July, 1924), 132-34. See also Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 203-15; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 120-42.

36. The best accounts (which have been followed in the foregoing discussion) of the Treaties of Sycamore Shoals with emphasis on their Tennessee aspects are Williams, *Dawn*, 401-25, and the same author's "Henderson and Company's Purchase Within the Limits of Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, V (April, 1919), 5-27. See also Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 70-71. More general accounts are Henderson, *Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 216-36, and map facing p. 192; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 143-57; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 3-13; and W. S. Lester, *The Transylvania Colony* (Spencer, Ind., 1935), 29-47. Garrett and Goodpasture, *History*, 52, has a helpful but somewhat inaccurate map of the Watauga and Brown purchases.

CHAPTER VI

The Tennessee Country in the Revolution

GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION—The beginning of the American Revolution in April, 1775, led to some governmental changes on the Tennessee frontier. By September the provisional government of North Carolina, which had replaced the royal authorities, authorized the creation of committees of safety in the several districts and counties into which the colony had been divided. Virginia also provided in the same manner for district and county committees of safety. For several reasons the residents in the Tennessee country were inclined toward the Revolutionary cause and desired to cooperate with North Carolina and Virginia Revolutionary governments. They desired to be free from British restrictions such as the Proclamation of 1763 and from the authority of the British superintendent of Indian affairs, John Stuart, who had ordered them to move off of the lands they had purchased from the Indians but which lay beyond the Cameron-Donelson line of 1771. They also resided within the bounds of Lord Granville's district, and they hoped that the war would bring to an end the title of that hated British nobleman.¹

The settlers north of the Holston River near the present Bristol were still under the wing of the Virginia government and on land legally ceded by the Indians. They were still recognized as citizens of Fincastle County, and under the leadership of Evan Shelby they participated in the organization of the Revolutionary government of that Virginia county. By the end of 1775 there were numerous settlers in the region west of the Holston near the Long Island (site of Kingsport) and in Carter's Valley. They also preferred Virginia government and had had some dealings with Fincastle County, but they were located on the Indian side of the 1771 line (which ran from a point six miles east of the Long Island to the Kentucky River) and they doubted their eligibility for that county's jurisdiction. Therefore they organized a district of their own with its separate committee of safety. They called it Pendleton District in honor of Edmund Pendleton, the Virginia leader who, as has been mentioned, had received Virginia grants to land in the neighborhood of the Long Island.²

Early in 1776 the residents of Pendleton District petitioned the Virginia government for the definite extension of governmental jurisdiction over their

affairs. One petition, which received favorable consideration from the Fincastle County committee on February 23, reads in part as follows:

To the Honourable, the Convention of the Colony of Virginia

The Petition of the Inhabitants of Pendleton District, Situate to the west of Part of Fincastle County, humbly Sheweth, - that your Petitioners, being deeply impressed with the Sense of the tyrannical & oppressive Measures agitated by the British Ministry against his Majesty's loyal Subjects in America; . . . think it unnatural that they, the few, being equally interested in the common Cause should be intirely [*sic*] inactive, while their Brethren are brave [ly] bleeding in the Field . . .

The petitioners continued, explaining that in order to "contribute their Mite to Support the glorious Cause," they had formed themselves "into a Society" and chosen a committee to superintend their affairs. Finally, they asked to be "incorporated into" the Virginia colony and promised obedience to its laws and "a Cheerful Contribution of their Quota of the general exigencies."^{3*}

The settlers south of the Holston on the Watauga and Nolichucky rivers also adhered to the Revolutionary cause and revised the government of the Watauga Association so as to provide for a committee of safety of thirteen members, of which John Carter was chairman. They gave this new government the name Washington District.** When this change was made is uncertain, but it probably was before the end of the year 1775. In their description of their action, in their petition to North Carolina, July 5, 1776, they indicated that the committee was formed very soon after they had purchased their lands from the Cherokee at Sycamore Shoals in March, 1775. Also, one of the petitions of the Pendleton District to Virginia, drafted in January, 1776, makes a reference to the neighboring Washington District. At any rate, there is little doubt but that this government, although somewhat irregular in form, was the first governmental subdivision named in honor of the commander in chief of the Revolutionary armies. In support of the Revolutionary cause a company of soldiers was enlisted and placed under the command of Captain James Robertson. A part of that company, under

* Two later petitions from the same group of people are printed in Prentiss Price, "Two Petitions," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 21 (1949), 100-110. One, received by the Virginia Convention June 10, 1776, asked for a division of Fincastle County to enable the signers to be closer to a county seat. After the request had been granted and Washington County created, in December, 1776, they complained, November 7, 1777, that the location of the courthouse of the new county was still too far from their homes.

** The area included in this district seems to have been the same as Watauga and Nolichucky purchases at Sycamore Shoals, which, as has been mentioned, took in a section of the present northwestern North Carolina, between the Unaka range and the Blue Ridge. That region was separated from Washington District and made a part of the new Wilkes County by North Carolina in 1777. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 23 n.



(Courtesy of the Museum)

Nashville—State Museum View

the command of Felix Walker, was sent in May, 1776, to aid in the defense of Charleston, South Carolina, against a British attack.*⁴

The reason why only a part of the company was dispatched to Charleston was that the Wataugans were at that time seriously threatened, as will be discussed presently, by an invasion by the Cherokee Indians. In view of this danger to their existence they appealed first to Virginia and then to North Carolina for annexation. The former petition was received by the Virginia Convention on May 23, 1776, but was fruitless.⁵ The people of Washington District then signed on July 5 their famous petition to North Carolina on which historians are so largely dependent for knowledge of the early settlement of the Tennessee country. After describing their settlement and the organization of the Watauga Association and of Washington District, and having noted the imminence of an

* The repulse of that attack, which occurred on June 28, was considered by a South Carolina historian, Edward McCrady, to be one of the three decisive battles of the Revolutionary War. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 34.

Indian war, which they blamed on British incitement, they closed with this appeal:

We pray your mature and deliberate consideration in our behalf, that you may annex us to your Province, (whether as county, district, or other division,) in such manner as may enable us to share in the glorious cause of Liberty; enforce our laws under authority, and in every respect become the best members of society; . . .⁶

The petition was received by the North Carolina council of safety on August 22. By that time the Cherokee attacks on the Watauga settlements had been repulsed, and American independence had been proclaimed in North Carolina. The council therefore recommended that the inhabitants of Washington District hold a "free and impartial election" on October 15 and choose five delegates to a provincial congress which was to meet at Halifax in November to draft a state constitution. In accordance with this proposal the westerners elected as delegates John Carter, John Sevier, Charles Robertson, John Haile, and Jacob Womack. Three members of the group—Carter, Robertson, and Haile—took their seats in that Congress on November 19. Sevier, who was involved in the retaliatory expedition against the Cherokee, did not appear until December 3. Womack did not attend. The other four, however, became signers of North Carolina's first state constitution. Of special interest to the representatives of the Washington District were the provisions of that constitution asserting North Carolina's title to all of the present Tennessee (and denying to the Indians any title to the land except for the "use" of such hunting grounds as the legislature might designate) but also leaving open the question of establishing in the future one or more new governments west of the mountains.

Appended to the constitution was an ordinance naming twenty-one justices of peace for the "District of Washington." Thus, although calling the region a district, the congress treated it as if it were a county and actually included it within the regular District of Salisbury along with several counties in what is now North Carolina. Soon thereafter an election was held of members of the first general assembly of the state of North Carolina. Washington District participated and named John Carter as the first senator from what is now Tennessee and elected John Sevier and Jacob Womack as members of the lower house, called the house of commons. This assembly which convened in April, 1777, at New Bern, named fourteen justices of peace* for Washington "District," and it was this group of squires which actually organized in August, with John Carter as chairman and William Cocke as clerk. The district also had a sheriff, probably Valentine Sevier, Jr., and a military organization similar to that of North Carolina's counties, with John Carter as colonel, John Sevier, lieutenant colonel, and Charles

* Included were John Carter, John Sevier, Charles Robertson (James Robertson was not named, presumably because he was planning to move west of the Holston), Valentine Sevier, Robert Lucas, John Haile, and Andrew Greer.

Robertson, major. If it had been legally recognized as a district it would have been entitled to a brigadier general as its commanding officer. Another feature of a North Carolina district, as distinct from a county, was the appointment of a superior judge. As evidence of the confusion in the minds of the legislators, the assembly in May did authorize the appointment of a judge for Washington District, but there is no evidence that any judge was ever appointed. Finally, the legislature in November straightened out the anomalous situation and created Washington County, which was to include all of present-day Tennessee. Thus the first* Washington District, with its uniqueness and irregularities, came to an end.⁷

The Cherokee War, 1776-1777—During the summer of 1776 the Cherokee Indians carried out a very determined invasion of the settlements in upper East Tennessee. Virginians and Carolinians believed that the primary cause of the invasion was incitement by British agents. Until 1930 the historians of Tennessee and the Old Southwest, almost without exception,⁸ accepted this viewpoint and denounced Superintendent John Stuart and his deputies for arousing the savages to engage in indiscriminate warfare against the frontiersmen. In 1930, however, two historians⁹ working independently with transcripts of documents in the British Record Office discovered evidence which largely clears the British agents of complicity in the beginning of the war and indicates that they tried to restrain the Indians from making their initial attacks.

Following the outbreak of the Revolution John Stuart was forced to flee from Charleston to Savannah, and from there to St. Augustine. His original purpose regarding the Indians in his charge, as revealed in his correspondence, was to try to induce them to remain neutral in the conflict. On August 30, 1775, he wrote to the Cherokee: "There is a difference between the White people of England and the White people of America, this is a matter which does not concern you: they will decide it among themselves." At the same time he sought to supply the Indians with the powder they needed for their hunting, since the Revolutionists had seized the ammunition they would normally have received through the traders. He feared that the lack of powder might lead the Indians to attack the frontier in an effort to replenish their supply. New orders received from General Thomas Gage in October, however, forced Stuart to modify his policy somewhat. Gage wrote that the "Rebels" had "open'd the door" by using the savages against the British in Boston, and therefore the Southern Indians should be induced to "take arms against his Majesty's Enemies, and to distress them all in their power." In his reply to Gage and in a letter to General Henry Clinton, Gage's successor in command, Stuart said he could not construe the orders as meaning an "indiscriminate attack" by the Indians on the frontier. He knew that many of the inhabitants of the Carolina back country were loyal to the Crown,

* This district should not be confused with the later Washington District created by the North Carolina assembly in 1784.

and such a war would involve those friends of the government and the "innocent & defenceless in ruin, and would induce a Coalition of all parties for repelling a Common Enemy." He therefore instructed his agents in the Indian country to "dispose the Indians to Act under their directions when required, but not to take any step except in the execution of some connected plan jointly" with Loyalist or British troops.¹⁰

To put the new policy into effect John Stuart sent his brother Henry as a special agent to the Southern Indians. At Mobile he met Dragging Canoe and other Cherokee chiefs who wanted to know the causes of the war and the reasons why their supplies of ammunition had been cut off. Stuart explained that the Revolutionists were attempting to distress the Indians by cutting off their trade, but assured them that his brother would supply them with ammunition for hunting and defense. With thirty horseloads of ammunition Henry Stuart left Mobile, and after passing through the Chickasaw towns he journeyed up the Tennessee River to the Overhill Cherokee country accompanied by Dragging Canoe and about eighty other Cherokee Indians. He was soon made aware that he would have no difficulty in inducing the Cherokee to take up arms on behalf of the British. Instead, his chief problem would be to restrain the young Indians from making an immediate and indiscriminate attack without waiting for the development of some concerted plan to operate in an organized way with Loyalist troops, as John Stuart's instructions required. Dragging Canoe complained bitterly about white encroachments on Cherokee land west of the Cameron-Donelson line of 1771. Stuart reminded them that those settlements were the result of their own "private bargains" with the whites at Sycamore Shoals made in disregard of his brother's advice. Dragging Canoe replied that those treaties had been made only by some old men who were "too old to hunt and who by their Poverty had been induced to sell their land," and that he and a "great many young fellows" were determined to recover possession of that land. The Indians were further aroused by the news given them by some emigrants from Virginia coming down the Holston on their way to Natchez that the Wataugans had told them that they were determined to settle as far south as the French Broad River and if the Cherokee opposed them they would drive them from their towns.¹¹

By the time Stuart's party reached the Overhill towns "nothing was talked of but War, to the no small uneasiness and discontent of the most thinking and sensible part of the Nation." At a meeting of assembled chiefs Henry Stuart protested against the proposed attack. He told the Indians, he reported to his brother,

. . . that there were many poor ignorant people on their Lands who were made to believe that the Lands were legally purchased and that they thought the Cherokee had no objections to their Settling them That if they should attack these people that they themselves had been the means of bringing on their Land they would draw on themselves the Resentment of every body.

He promised to write to the settlers and try to induce them to move. The Indians agreed, and a trader named Isaac Thomas was sent with a letter signed by Henry Stuart and Alexander Cameron (British agent to the Cherokee) and dated May 7, 1776, addressed to the Watauga and Nolichucky settlers and "others settled on this side the Boundary line": "Humanity and a sincere desire to preserve innocent and wrong informed people from the great danger that seems to threaten them are our only motives for writing to you at this time." The letter continued with a warning that the Indians were greatly discontented "on account of the new Settlements" made in the Indian country and would already have attacked them had it not been for the writers' restraining influence. "We promised," wrote Stuart and Cameron, "that we would write to you to remove to a Country more favourable to industrious white people" such as West Florida, where those willing to be "good and peaceable subjects" could get British grants of land, and they had induced the Indians to allow them twenty days in which to move. Enclosed was a "talk" from the Cherokee to the settlers.

Although this alarming intelligence created much consternation among the inhabitants of the upper East Tennessee country, a majority of the settlers were determined to hold on to their lands. What they needed was more time in which to prepare their defenses and obtain help from their neighbors to the north and east. Therefore, they sent Thomas back to the Cherokee country with conciliatory messages. In a letter to Stuart and Cameron dated May 13 and signed by John Carter, the chairman of the Watauga Committee of Safety, the Wataugans expressed amazement that their "Brothers," the Cherokee, with whom they had long lived in peace, should now wish to destroy them. Regarding their right to their land they relied "upon the Contract that was made" with the Cherokee, but if it was not binding they were "willing to give it up, when we are legally called upon, whenever our Brothers will meet as Brothers." Pointing out that twenty days was too short a time in which to expect them to move, they asked for an extension of that time. In order to make sure that the British agents would do their best to obtain for them additional time, they pretended loyalty to the British government. In relation to the existing conflict they declared that "Subjects must Obey Their Sovereign, which We as Subjects sincerely determine to do" In closing they asked for an immediate reply telling them where they might find an asylum, "for We, (some of us at least,) are determined to support His Majesty's Crown and Dignity" Apparently, Thomas, accompanied by another trader named John Bryan, took with him to the Cherokee country not only this letter but also one from the Nolichucky settlers,* signed by Aaron Penson, expressing similar sentiments of loyalty.

On May 23 Thomas and Bryan were sent back to the Watauga and Noli-

* There was also a personal letter from Jacob Brown to the Raven protesting against the denial of his title to his land, the boundaries of which had been marked by the Little Carpenter himself.

chucky country with replies from Stuart and Cameron to the Carter and Penson letters and another "talk" from the Indians granting the settlers twenty additional days in which to move. The British agents repeated the offer of land in West Florida to those who were loyal, but to Penson they explained:

The notice we gave of the intention of the Indians was intended for the Inhabitants in general without regard to their Political Principles, for howsoever different Our Opinions may be from any of the Inhabitants we Could never have forgiven Ourselves if by Ommitting[sic] to inform you of what Came to Our knowledge of the Intention of the Indians, if [sic] we had suffered innocent women and Children to fall a Sacrifice.

To Carter they wrote:

We do not apprehend the dispute between Great Brittain [sic] and the Provinces, influences the Indians in the least in their behaviour to the people who are settled on their Lands. This discontent of the young fellows is not at all new although the effect of it has not hitherto appeard [sic]. It was like to have made bad blood among themselves; but Now they seem unanimously resolved to recover their lands.¹²

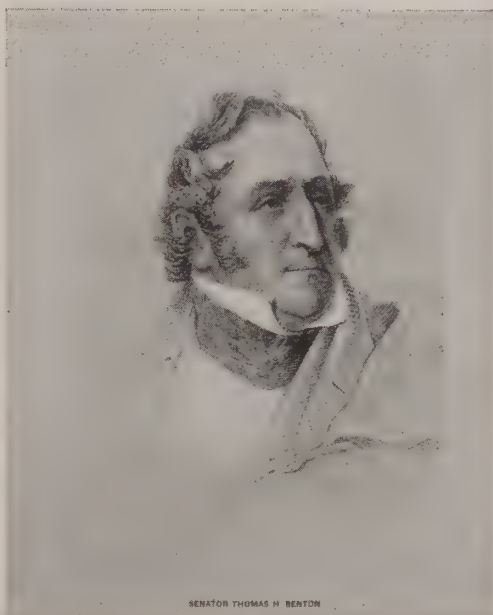
While engaged in their successful effort to induce the Indians to postpone their attack, the Wataugans were attempting to obtain help from Virginia in defending themselves against the impending invasion. Soon after receiving the Stuart-Cameron letter of May 7, they sent a copy of it (apparently with some changes in content) to the Committee of Safety of Fincastle County and asked for a supply of ammunition and other help for their defense. To their great disappointment, they were advised by the Fincastle Committee to avoid hostilities by moving quickly to the white side of the boundary line of 1771. It thus became evident that if they were to obtain aid from the Revolutionary authorities in repelling the Indian invasion which was certain if they did not move, it would be necessary to create the impression that the only reason why they were in danger was because of their adherence to the Revolutionary cause. Accordingly, they caused to be circulated widely in Virginia and the Carolinas copies of a letter signed with Henry Stuart's name which appeared mysteriously at Charles Robertson's gate on the evening of May 18. The contents of this letter are so much at variance with the letters known to have been written by Stuart and Cameron on May 7 and May 23 that it is practically impossible to imagine that it was actually written by the British agent. When he learned about it, Stuart vigorously denied that he had anything to do with the letter, and he submitted as proof the testimony given by Isaac Thomas under oath that it had actually been forged by a Wataugan named Jessy (Jesse) Benton.* Since the

* The father of Thomas Hart Benton, noted Senator from Missouri, 1820-1850.

original is not available it is impossible to say with certainty whether it was forged or not, but as Hamer insists, it is probable that it was. The letter stated that it was not "the desire of his Majesty to set his friends and allies, the Indians, on his liege subjects," and therefore urged those settlers who wished to prevent "inevitable ruin to themselves and families" to make a written pledge of loyalty to the Crown. A British army, it declared, was about to land in West Florida, march to the Overhill Cherokee country, and with Creek, Chickasaw, and Cherokee Indians invade the frontiers of Virginia and North Carolina while other British forces were attacking the seacoasts of those colonies. Whether forged or not, the circulation of the letter achieved its purpose and obtained for the frontiersmen Eastern aid in preparing to defend themselves against the threatened invasion.¹³

Meanwhile, the war spirit was rising rapidly in the Cherokee country, stimulated by the arrival of a delegation of fourteen Northern Indians which advocated a general Indian war on the frontier to recover lost lands. Plans were made for a general meeting in ten days of the whole Cherokee Nation, and, wrote Henry Stuart to his brother, "every young Fellow's face in the Overhills Towns appeared Blackened, and nothing was talked of but War." He and Cameron attempted to restrain them and received some help from the older warriors, but the agents were blamed by the young ones for having warned the settlers who, it was reported, were rapidly building forts for their defense. Reports also came in that an army was being raised in Virginia to invade the Cherokee country.

When the general meeting was held the Northern Indians made long speeches urging war, and the young warriors under the leadership of Dragging Canoe responded in a similar vein. The old men sat dejected. When a Shawnee delegate passed the war belt, Henry Stuart and Cameron refused to touch it, saying that they would not sanction a war until John Stuart authorized it. Consequently, the issue was left in doubt for several days. At that critical juncture Isaac Thomas arrived with a message from the Fincastle County Committee which, although designed to aid in preserving peace, had exactly the opposite effect. It warned



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Senator Thomas H. Benton

the Cherokee against evil and designing men (British agents) who sought to involve them in the contest between the Americans and servants of the King who wanted to take money from the Americans without their consent and make slaves of them. If they had any complaints against the people on the Watauga and the Nolichucky, they should present them to the Virginia government or to the commissioners appointed by Congress to deal with the Indians. The Fincastle Committee demanded that certain Indians who had killed some white men on the road to Kentucky should be punished. If this were not done, and if any more murders were committed, they could expect an invasion which would result in "the destruction and perhaps utter extirpation of the Cherokee Nation."

That letter, reported Henry Stuart, "so exasperated the Indians that we had little hopes after this of being able to restrain them." This was especially so since Thomas also brought exaggerated reports that an army of six thousand men, which had been raised in Virginia and North Carolina to fight the British, was to be used instead to oppose the Indians. The Cherokee naturally concluded that unless the frontier settlements were attacked immediately they would be too well defended for the invasion to be successful. Therefore, plans were made for an early attack. Unable any longer to prevent the war, Henry Stuart and Cameron gave strict orders that the boundary line of 1771 should not be passed, that Loyalists and women and children should not be killed, and that the war should be ended immediately if John Stuart should so command. Realizing that these orders would be ineffectual, Cameron went to the Lower Cherokee towns and Henry Stuart returned to Pensacola. The Indians were willing, however, to give the considerable number of Tories residing in Nolichucky settlement an opportunity to save themselves by joining the invasion or by putting up a white flag. Thomas had reported that these Tories had been forced by the Revolutionists* to take an oath that they would be neutral, but that they did not consider themselves bound by that oath. Nathaniel Gist, then in the Indian country and cooperating with the British and the Indians, offered to carry this warning to the Tories provided four white men who knew the country and some Indians would accompany him. The four white traders chosen for that duty, Isaac Williams, Jarret Williams, William Fallin (Faulin), and Isaac Thomas, had no desire to participate in such an undertaking, and they managed to escape. They rushed to Fort Lee on the Nolichucky and gave John Sevier the warning that the In-

* Two companies under the command of James Robertson and John Shelby (Evan's brother) had come down from the Watauga and the Holston and forced about seventy suspected Tories to take an oath of allegiance to the Revolution or at least agree to be neutral. Those unwilling were "drummed out of the settlement." According to William Tatham, these Tories were mainly North Carolina Regulators who had fled after the Battle of Alamance (but presumably not until after they had been forced to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown, which was a factor in their becoming Tories). Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 32, 35 n.

dians were about to attack and gave him also the details of the Indians' plans for the invasion, which had been given to them by the friendly Indian woman, Nancy Ward.* Sevier, who was in charge of the construction and garrisoning of that fort, sent Thomas northward through the Watauga and Holston settlements to the Fincastle Committee with the news.¹⁴

Fort Lee was the nearest fort to the Cherokee country but still was incomplete. Others constructed by the settlers for their defense were Fort Caswell on the Watauga, Shelby's Fort at the site of Bristol, and Eaton's Station about five miles east of the present Kingsport. There were also fortified stations at Jacob Womack's, two miles east of the present Bluff City, and at John Shelby's, three miles farther east on the Holston. When the news of the coming invasion reached Fort Lee, most of the inhabitants of the Nolichucky fled precipitately, taking their livestock and provisions with them. This left Sevier and his garrison of about fifteen volunteers in an indefensible position and they abandoned the fort and fell back to Fort Caswell.

The Indians' plan of campaign was to divide their force of about seven hundred into three commands. One group under Dragging Canoe was to attack the settlers in the vicinity of the Long Island and move on up into Virginia. The second, under Old Abram, was to invade the Nolichucky and Watauga country. A smaller group, under the Raven, was to deal with the scattered settlers in Carter's Valley. Most of these settlers fled at the approach of the Indians, and the Raven's party engaged in burning and pillaging not only in Carter's Valley but also in southwestern Virginia. Dragging Canoe's force approached Eaton's Station by way of the Long Island and camped there. The garrison at the station, under the command of William Cocke,** moved out to attack, fearing that otherwise the Indians might bypass the fort and spend their time destroying the homes, livestock, and crops of the men inside. At the important Battle of Island Flats on July 20 they defeated the Indians and wounded Dragging Canoe. Thus the whites were able to show that they could defeat the savages at their own type of warfare. Thenceforth, the Indians had less confidence in their own valor.

The next day after Island Flats, Old Abram subjected Fort Caswell on the Watauga to a vigorous assault*** that was repulsed with a considerable number of casualties. The fort was then subjected to a siege for about two weeks and various stratagems were used in the attempts to capture it. One nearly-successful effort to set the fort on fire was frustrated by Ann Robertson, the youthful sister

* The "Beloved Woman" of the Cherokee, who saved many white persons from death at the hands of the Indians. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 36 n.

** According to the view of some contemporaries, Cocke gave evidence of cowardice during this engagement.

*** It was at the beginning of this assault that John Sevier helped Catherine Sherrill into the fort over the stockade when she and other women had been surprised by the Indians while milking cows. In 1780, after the death of his first wife, Sarah Hawkins Sevier, John married Catherine ("Bonnie Kate").

of James Robertson. Taking advantage of the fact that it happened to be wash day and a large supply of boiling water was available, she organized a "bucket brigade" to pour the scalding water down upon the nearly-naked red attackers. Finally becoming discouraged, the Indians lifted the siege and withdrew.¹⁵

Even before the Cherokee invasion occurred the Revolutionary authorities of Virginia and North and South Carolina began to develop plans for concerted attacks upon the several groups of Cherokee towns, and the plans were carried into effect soon after that invasion. The expedition to the Overhill Cherokee country was led by Colonel William Christian of Virginia and included not only the Virginia and Watauga troops but also a small force from Surry County, North Carolina, commanded by Joseph Williams.* The rendezvous of the army of 1,800 men was held at the recently-constructed Fort Patrick Henry at the Long Island of the Holston late in September, 1776. Overawed by the superior force, the Indians abandoned their towns on the Little Tennessee River and fled precipitately. Despite the efforts of Alexander Cameron to induce them to continue the war, the older chiefs came to Christian and negotiated a preliminary treaty by which they agreed to surrender their white prisoners and stolen horses and to send a delegation the next year to the Long Island to negotiate a new boundary line. Dragging Canoe, however, refused to accept any peace terms and led a secession movement from the Cherokee of the most unruly element, which retired to Chickamauga Creek near the present Chattanooga and became the core of the "Chickamauga Indians." Joined by recalcitrant Indians of other tribes, they became a serious menace to the whites in the Tennessee and Kentucky country. After destroying several of the Cherokee towns, the Christian expedition returned to Fort Patrick Henry.

Despite continued depredations** by the Chickamauga Indians, the final peace conference arranged for by Christian was held at the Long Island in June and July, 1777, but Dragging Canoe and his Chickamaugans were not represented. Although Oconostota and Attakullakulla attended, they were now so old that they allowed the younger chiefs, the Raven and Old Tassel (Cornassel), to be the leading spokesmen for the Indians. Virginia was represented by Colonels William Christian, William Preston, and Evan Shelby.*** From North Carolina came Waightstill Avery, William Sharpe, Robert Lanier, and Joseph Winston. The conference was interrupted by the killing of an Indian named Big Bullet by a white man, but the atonement offered by the whites was accepted and the

* His son John became a Senator from Tennessee and a noted opponent of Andrew Jackson.

** In one of them the grandfather of the celebrated David Crockett (also named David) and several of his family were killed in Carter's Valley near Rogersville. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 163; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 62.

*** These commissioners had held a previous conference with the Indians at the Long Island in April at which they tried to get them to take up arms against the British, but they would agree to nothing more than neutrality.

conference proceeded. A more auspicious interruption occurred on July 4, when the Indians joined with the white people in celebrating the first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

The Cherokee apparently came with the expectation that the Nolichucky Valley might be cleared of white occupation, but the American negotiators insisted that the Indian cession should include all of the settlements previously made by the whites. It was not, however, until both Christian and Avery had given definite assurance that the new line would remain forever inviolate that the Indians agreed to the proposed cession. Avery declared: "We are about to fix a line that is to remain through all generations, and be kept by our Children's children"; and Christian assured the Indians that "the line shall be like a wall, high and strong that none can pass over or break down." On July 20 separate treaties were signed by the Indians with the Virginia and North Carolina commissioners. To the Virginians the Cherokee ceded all their claims north of a line beginning at the "lower corner" of the Donelson line (a point on the Holston River six miles above the Long Island) and following the Holston to the mouth of Cloud's Creek, and then running in a straight line to a point between three and five miles west of Cumberland Gap. For this cession Virginia agreed to give the Cherokee 200 cows and 100 sheep. Included in this purchase was a considerable stretch of country south of the 36° 30' parallel which technically belonged to North Carolina, according to the colonial charters, but over which Virginia had extended its jurisdiction at the beginning of the Revolution. The North Carolina-Cherokee line, according to the other treaty, was to begin at the mouth of Cloud's Creek and run northeastward to the highest point on a mountain called Chimney Top, thence southward to the Nolichucky River at the mouth of Camp Creek (a few miles southeast of the site of Greeneville), and from there in a southwestward direction to the mountains dividing the hunting grounds of the Overhill and Middle Cherokee. No mention was made of any compensation to be paid by North Carolina. A little more land was included than by the Watauga and Nolichucky purchases of 1775, but the claims of Henderson and the Transylvania Company were ignored, although Henderson was present and presented a memorial to the conference. The two treaties provided that both Virginia and North Carolina were to send agents* to reside in the Overhill towns, that no white man was to reside in or pass through those towns without the consent of the two states, but also that "no white man under any pretence whatsoever, shall build, plant, improve, settle, hunt, or drive stock below the said Boundary line on pain of being drove [*sic*] off by the Indians."¹⁶

The King's Mountain Campaign—The success of the settlers in East Tennessee and southwestern Virginia in maintaining their settlements in the face of Indian invasions contributed materially to the attainment of American independence. It

* James Robertson was appointed by North Carolina and Joseph Martin by Virginia.

kept open the road to Kentucky and made it possible for the settlements in that area also to maintain themselves. In 1777 Captain William B. Smith of Kentucky recruited about forty-five men in "North Carolina"—actually East Tennessee—for the defense of Boonesboro and Harrodsburg against raids by Chickamauga Indians, and a year later still another contingent to replace Kentucky troops which accompanied George Rogers Clark in his invasion and conquest of the Illinois country.¹⁷ The most noteworthy contribution of the future East Tennesseans to American independence was at the Battle of King's Mountain; but before they could participate effectively in such campaigns east of the mountains it was necessary to provide for their own safety by chastising the Chickamauga Indians, whose raids on the western settlements were increasingly annoying. Moreover, the Chickamauga were obtaining an increasing amount of cooperation from the Cherokee who had made peace in 1777. This was due in part to anger caused by continued white encroachments below the line of 1777 in violation of the assurances given at the Long Island. Also involved were the activities of the British agent, Alexander Cameron, who was trying to organize the Western Indians for an attack on the Carolina country in conjunction with the back country Tories.

In April, 1779, an expedition commanded by Colonel Evan Shelby journeyed down the Holston and Tennessee rivers to the Chickamauga country and, meeting no resistance, destroyed several towns and collected a large amount of booty. One part of the army, a force of Virginians commanded by Captain John Montgomery and headed for the Illinois country to join Clark, continued on their way and aided that leader in holding the Old Northwest for the Americans. The remainder of the expedition returned home overland. A short distance above the site of Chattanooga they stopped on the bank of a creek and held a sale of the captured booty. That stream has since been known as Sale Creek.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the East Tennessee country received a new tide of immigration from the east, sufficient to enable the area to supply a considerable number of settlers for the organized settlement of the Cumberland Valley which occurred in 1779-1780.* One type of immigrant, however, was not considered very desirable—refugee Tories from eastern regions controlled by the Patriots. The newly organized county court** of Washington County, North Carolina, had to devote much of its time to considering cases of persons charged with being Loyalists or with harboring Loyalists. The latter were usually imprisoned for short terms, but the Tories themselves were frequently subjected to exile or imprisonment for the period of the war, confiscation of property, and occasionally to impressment into the Continental army. Such treatment, however, was an im-

* To be described in the next chapter.

** The first meeting was held at the home of Charles Robertson on February 23, 1778. John Carter was chairman and also entry taker, John Sevier was clerk, and Valentine Sevier, sheriff.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Museum

provement over the types of punishment, often death, meted out by what was in effect a vigilance committee which preceded the establishment of the county court.¹⁹

In 1780 it was the Patriots of the Carolinas rather than the Tories who were seeking refuge west of the mountains. In May of that year the British finally captured Charleston, and soon a large army under Lord Cornwallis was invading North Carolina. Colonel Banastre Tarleton and Major Patrick Ferguson scoured the Piedmont enlisting Tories and attempting to crush all opposition to the Crown. The Patriot leader Colonel Charles McDowell sent a call for help to the over-mountain settlements. About four hundred men under the command of Colonel Isaac Shelby of the recently-organized Sullivan County* and Major Charles Robertson of Washington County went to his aid and defeated contingents of Ferguson's troops at Musgrove's Mill, August 18, and in other small engagements. Then

* Created in 1779 to include the North Holston settlements previously governed by Virginia.

came the news of the disastrous defeat of General Horatio Gates' army by Cornwallis at Camden, and both Shelby and McDowell were forced to retreat across the mountains to Watauga.²⁰

Learning apparently for the first time of the existence of the western settlements, Ferguson sent a warning to them that if they "did not desist from their opposition to the British arms," he would "march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay their country waste with fire and sword."²¹ Colonels Shelby and Sevier of Sullivan and Washington counties, respectively, decided not to wait for such an attack but to move against Ferguson first, hoping to surprise and defeat him. With the cooperation of Colonel William Campbell of southwestern Virginia and Colonel McDowell and his refugees, they organized an army of about one thousand men. Sevier induced John Adair, entry taker of Sullivan County, to release to him funds to obtain supplies. The soldiers of this motley army, dressed in hunting costumes and carrying their own hunting rifles, assembled at Sycamore Shoals, September 25, 1780, and received, according to tradition, the blessing of the Presbyterian preacher, Samuel Doak. East of the mountains they were joined by other Patriots of the Carolinas and Georgia. Ferguson, apprised of the westerners' advance by two American deserters, retreated eastward to King's Mountain, a narrow ridge about sixty feet high located in the northeastern corner of South Carolina. Boasting that "the Almighty" could not drive him from that height, he awaited expected reinforcements from Cornwallis. His army, mostly Tories, numbered nearly a thousand men.*

The Americans, on October 7, under the general command of Colonel Campbell, assaulted the enemy's position on the mountain from both sides. Fighting in Indian fashion, using trees and rocks for shelter, they advanced up the mountain side, retreated before the Tory bayonets, then advanced again when the Tories returned to the mountain top to contend with Patriots coming up on the other side. At length Ferguson was killed, and Abraham de Peyster, who assumed command, raised the white flag. Apparently some of the Patriots did not know of the meaning of a white flag or in the bitterness of their hatred chose not to, and the American commanders had difficulty in getting them to cease firing. Reports of the casualties are conflicting. With a very few exceptions, all of Ferguson's force were killed, wounded, or captured. According to Shelby's personal account, less exaggerated than the official report, the British and Tories lost 157 killed, 153 wounded, and 706 prisoners. The Americans lost 28 killed and 62 wounded. Recently there came to light an interesting diary kept by an anonymous Tory in Ferguson's command. After tracing Ferguson's retreat to King's Mountain, he closed with the following observation:

. . . the cursed rebels Came upon us killed and Took us every Soul and so

* Not including about two hundred absent on a foraging expedition at the time of the battle.

My Dear Friends I bid you farewell for I am started to the warm country.²²

The victory was of great significance. It justifiably has been called the turning point of the Revolution in the South. It greatly encouraged the Southern Patriots and correspondingly discouraged the Loyalists. It caused Cornwallis to abandon his campaign in North Carolina and retreat. After receiving reinforcements, however, he renewed the campaign the next year, but was successfully checked by General Nathanael Greene at Guilford Courthouse in March, 1781. Although technically victorious, Cornwallis moved his army to Wilmington and from there to Yorktown, where its surrender on October 19 brought hostilities practically to an end. In Greene's army at Guilford Courthouse there was a small force from the East Tennessee country under the command of Major Charles Robertson. Another group of about 600 westerners, under the command of Isaac Shelby and John Sevier, joined General Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox," in "mopping up" operations in South Carolina.²³

The chief reason why the westerners did not participate more actively in campaigns east of the mountains was because of the continuing danger of Indian troubles in their home country. The effect of the chastisement of the Chickamauga in 1779 was temporary, and those Indians and also the Cherokee came increasingly under British influence as they depended for their supplies upon the British-held posts of Savannah and Augusta. The departure of most of the able-bodied men of the western country on the King's Mountain campaign presented to the Overhill Cherokee an opportunity to drive the white people from their lands. Before they were ready, however, the western army had returned from King's Mountain, and John Sevier decided to forestall the imminent attack by invading the Cherokee country. After calling on Colonel Arthur Campbell of Virginia for help, he led the Washington County troops across the French Broad and on December 16 defeated the Indians at Boyd's Creek in what is now Sevier County. Under instructions from Campbell he delayed marching to the Cherokee towns until the main army under Campbell's command had joined them, although his men nearly starved while waiting. When Campbell at length arrived, the army marched to the Little Tennessee River, burned several of the Indian towns, from which the savages had fled, and then destroyed those on the Tellico and Hiwassee rivers. The expedition greatly weakened the power of the Overhill Cherokee to resist the relentless pressure of the whites. Early in 1781 Sevier led another expedition against the Middle Cherokee to assure their remaining at peace. In July of that year another peace conference with the Cherokee convened at the Long Island; but after an unprecedented occurrence, a speech by an Indian woman—Nancy Ward—, the negotiations were concluded without any additional cession of land by the Indians. Nevertheless, most of the Overhill Cherokee were gradually moving southward away from the Little Tennessee in the direction of Georgia.

The Chickamauga Indians, under Dragging Canoe, still refused to make peace, and in 1782 Sevier led an expedition against them. He destroyed their towns on Chickamauga Creek and along the Coosa River in Georgia. But a Cherokee guide, John Watts, succeeded in diverting the expedition away from the five new towns, including Running Water and Nickajack, which the Chickamauga had established along the Tennessee River below the site of Chattanooga. However, the Chickamauga had gained such respect for the fighting ability of the East Tennesseans that they directed most of their attacks thereafter against the weaker settlements along the Cumberland River in what is now Middle Tennessee.²⁴

CHAPTER VI—NOTES

1. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 73; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I, 217; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 15.
2. *Ibid.*, 15-17.
3. Facsimiles of this petition, and of the action of the Fincastle Committee taken from the Virginia Archives, are in *ibid.*, between pp. 16 and 17.
4. *Ibid.*, 15-18, 32-33. See also his "The First Territorial Division Named for Washington," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, second series, II (April, 1932), 153-59; reprinted in *Tennessee: Old and New* (2 vols., Nashville, 1946), I, 201-12.
5. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 18, citing Force, *American Archives* (Series 4), VI, 1533-35. The petition itself is not extant.
6. The physician-historian Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey found this document in the North Carolina Archives and printed it verbatim in his *Annals* (1853), 134-38. Since then the original has been lost. It was signed by twelve members of the committee of safety, including Chairman Carter, Charles and James Robertson, John Sevier, and Jacob Brown, by its author, William Tatham, as clerk pro tempore, and by one hundred others, only two of whom had to sign with his mark. Ramsey thought it was written by John Sevier, but the writings of Tatham reveal that he was the author and also supply the date, July 5. S. C. Williams, *William Tatham, Wataugan* (Johnson City, 1947), 16-17.
7. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 89-90; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I, 217-30; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 75; also his "First Division," in *Tennessee: Old and New*, I, 206-12, and "Western Representation in North Carolina Assemblies," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 14 (1942), 106-12.
8. The one exception was Constance Skinner, who in her *Pioneers of the Old Southwest* (1919), 174-75, states that the impression of British incitement was created by the widespread distribution of letters which the British superintendent of Indian affairs, John Stuart, claimed were forgeries.
9. The most complete refutation of the charges was made by Philip M. Hamer in a series of works: "John Stuart's Indian Policy During the Early Months of the American Revolution," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XVII (December, 1930), 351-66, accompanied by the edited "Correspondence of Henry Stuart and Alexander Cameron with the Wataugans," *ibid.*, 451-59; "The Wataugans and the Cherokee Indians in 1776," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 3 (1931), 108-26; and *Tennessee*, I, 73-82. The other historian is Helen L. Shaw, whose *British Administration of the Southern Indians, 1756-1783* (Lancaster, Pa., 1931), 91-93, 102-103, 116, covers much of the same ground with similar conclusions but

- is less complete and is not presented so clearly as a refutation of erroneous accounts. Carol Furlong Young, "A Study of Some Developing Interpretations of the History of Revolutionary Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 25 (1953), 24-36, is a careful analysis of the literature on the subject both before and after 1930 and shows that several works published after the Hamer evidence became available refuse to accept the new viewpoint or accept it only in part. On the other hand, J. R. Alden, the outstanding specialist on the career of John Stuart in *John Stuart*, 171 n., says Hamer "thoroughly disproved" the long accepted charges. In his later work, *The South in the Revolution* (Baton Rouge, 1957), 270-71, he takes the same position, as does also Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 112-13.
10. Hamer, "Stuart's Indian Policy," 351-62, 362 n.; "Wataugans and the Cherokee," 108-09.
 11. *Ibid.*, 109-10, 114-15.
 12. *Ibid.*, 115-18. The letters of Henry Stuart and Alexander Cameron of May 7 and May 23 and the Watauga (Carter) letter of May 13 are printed in Hamer (ed.), *Correspondence*, 452-57.
 13. Henry Stuart to Edward Wilkinson, June 28, 1776, *ibid.*, 458-59; Hamer, "Wataugans and the Cherokee," 118-24. The allegedly forged letter of Henry Stuart's is printed in Ramsey, *Annals*, 147-48.
 14. *Ibid.*, 148-49; Hamer, "Wataugans and the Cherokee," 126; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 143-48; Williams, "Nathaniel Gist," 47-49; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 35-36.
 15. *Ibid.*, 35-47; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 148-54; Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, I, 335-46; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 82-83; S. C. Williams, "Ann Robertson: An Unsung Tennessee Heroine," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III (June, 1944), 150-55.
 16. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 83-88; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 48-71. The proceedings of the Long Island conference are in Archibald Henderson (ed.), "The Treaty of Long Island of Holston, July, 1777," *North Carolina Historical Review*, VIII (January, 1931), 55-116; Charles C. Royce, "The Cherokee Nation," *Fifth Annual Report*, Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1887), 149-51.
 17. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 71-72, 81-82. Biographers of Boone erroneously concluded that these troops came from the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina.
 18. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 92-93; Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga Country*, 29-30; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 71-74, 91-99.
 19. *Ibid.*, 84-89; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 91-92. Young, "Some Developing Interpretations," 33-36, shows that most recent writers treat the subject of the Tories more objectively than earlier historians, some of whom were inclined to consider the terms outlaw and Tory synonymous.
 20. Among the numerous accounts of the King's Mountain Campaign are Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 93-97; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 128-62; Driver, *John Sevier*, 39-60; Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 235-51; The most detailed account is Lyman C. Draper, *King's Mountain and Its Heroes* (New York, 1929—first edition, Cincinnati, 1881). Included in the appendix is much of the source material.
 21. *Ibid.*, 562.
 22. Mary Hardin McCown (ed.), "A King's Mountain Diary," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 14 (1942), 102-05. The last page of the diary is reproduced in Williams, *Revolutionary War*, opposite p. 157.
 23. *Ibid.*, 195-204, 217-24.
 24. *Ibid.*, 182-94, 199-212; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 191-202; Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga Country*, 34-36; Randolph C. Downes, "Cherokee-American Relations in the Upper Tennessee Valley, 1776-1791," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 35-38.

CHAPTER VII

The Cumberland Settlement

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENTS—While the Revolutionary War was in progress the Tennessee frontier line moved across the Cumberland Mountains into the valley of the Cumberland River. The organized settlement occurred under the sponsorship of the Transylvania Company in 1779-1780, but by that time there were already a few scattered settlers living in that area. According to tradition the first permanent settler in what is now Nashville was a French-Canadian named Timothy Demonbreun (Jacques Timothé DeMontbrun) who established a trading post at "French Lick" about 1769. It is probable, however, that he spent only the major portion of each winter in Middle Tennessee and did not move from the Illinois country to Nashville until 1790. During the early part of the war he acted for a time as a British agent and had some contacts with refugee Tories who attempted unsuccessfully to establish a settlement on the Cumberland. Later he adhered to the Revolutionary cause, fought under Clark in the conquest of the Old Northwest, and became lieutenant governor of the Illinois country with headquarters at Kaskaskia under the authority of the state of Virginia. Another traditional "first settler" in Middle Tennessee was Thomas Sharp ("Big Foot") Spencer, who is supposed to have taken up his residence about 1778 in a hollow tree in Sumner County and spread his mammoth footprints over a wide area; but it is believed by modern historians* that he was merely a hunter and not an actual settler. By 1778-1779, however, some of the "long hunters" such as Kasper Mansker and Michael Stoner, who had explored the region after the French and Indian War, were returning to become permanent residents, and there were other scattered settlers.¹

The interest of Judge Henderson of the Transylvania Company in the Cumberland Valley began as early as 1775, when he insisted that the Cherokee cession at Sycamore Shoals should include the land watered by the Cumberland River. It is probable that while engaged in the occupation of the blue grass region of Kentucky he also had in mind the aim of establishing a second settlement in the similarly-endowed Nashville Basin. By 1778 his opportunities for profit from the

* For example, S. C. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 103 n. See also the fictionalized account, Edd Winfield Parks, *Long Hunter: The Story of Big-foot Spencer* (New York, 1942).

Kentucky undertaking had been largely frustrated by Virginia's refusal to recognize the Company's title to the land, and his attention quickly shifted to the Cumberland Valley, which he hoped and believed lay within the bounds of North Carolina instead of Virginia. To serve as the agent of the company in founding the settlement on the Cumberland, Henderson made the excellent choice of James Robertson. It seems that the original plan was to move about two hundred settlers into the Cumberland Valley in March, 1779; but it was later decided to postpone the settlement for a few months and to send Robertson on ahead with eight companions to select the site, plant a crop of corn, and make other preparations for the arrival of the settlers. Before returning to the Holston, Robertson journeyed to the Illinois country and made arrangements with George Rogers Clark, who had acquired title from a Virginia soldier, to obtain "cabin rights" to land on the Cumberland in the event the survey of the boundary line which was about to be made should show that the site chosen for the settlement was in Virginia instead of North Carolina.²

The initiative in arranging for the survey of the boundary actually was taken by Virginia, even though it was generally recognized that such a survey would result in the state's losing jurisdiction over the settlers north of the Holston and in Carter's Valley, in the East Tennessee region. While the survey was being made, the legislature of North Carolina created Sullivan County to include those areas and also another small section of territory already recognized as being a part of this state's Washington County.* It is one of the mysteries of history why North Carolina had for such a long time allowed the North Holston and Carter's Valley settlers to be governed by Virginia and pay their taxes to that state. As intimated in an earlier chapter, the explanation probably lies in the fact that much of North Carolina's land south of Virginia belonged to Lord Granville. That situation was changed, however, by the Revolution. In her constitution of 1776 and in a land act of 1777 North Carolina disregarded the Granville claim and then set up a land office in Washington County as well as in other counties of the state. For the price of fifty shillings per hundred acres any adult male could acquire 640 acres, and if he had a family one hundred additional acres for his wife and each child. More land could be purchased at a higher price. Preemption rights were given to actual settlers. Since entry of land on the Indian side of the boundary line of 1777 was not prohibited until a year later, speculators had time to acquire title to more than a million acres of land in the Indian country.** Also in 1777 the legislature nullified Lord Gran-

* In the same year, 1779, the legislature incorporated Jonesborough (now Jonesboro) as county seat of Washington County. It is the oldest incorporated town in Tennessee. S. C. Williams, "The Founder of Tennessee's First Town: Major Jesse Walton," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 2 (1930), 75-76.

** The prohibition in 1778 of settlement on the Indian side of the line of 1777 made settlers available for the migration to the Cumberland Valley.

ville's title. In an act of that year providing for the confiscation of Tory property, without naming Granville it provided in effect that he could retain his title only by becoming a citizen of North Carolina before October, 1778. After the war was over, the Granville heirs attempted by court action to recover possession, but without success.³

The names of the three commissioners appointed to survey the North Carolina-Virginia boundary reveal very clearly the influence of the land companies. Judge Henderson and two of his associates in the Transylvania Company—John Williams and William Bailey Smith—were named by North Carolina, and the leading Virginia commissioner, Dr. Thomas Walker, was the organizer of the Loyal Land Company of Virginia, which still had a great amount of interest in Virginia lands on the North Carolina border. The other Virginian, Major Daniel Smith, who later settled on the Cumberland, kept a journal of the survey. As mentioned in the first chapter, the two groups, reflecting the interests of their respective land companies, disagreed and then surveyed two parallel lines for a part of the distance. Henderson, however, after becoming convinced that even the Walker line would run considerably north of the site of Nashville, and after traveling to Kentucky to arrange for the shipment of a supply of corn to the Cumberland settlement, arrived there himself in time to take the lead in setting up a form of government for the settlers.⁴

Establishment of the Settlement; The Cumberland Compact—The migration of settlers to the Cumberland, under the sponsorship of the Transylvania Company, followed two routes, one overland and the other by water. James Robertson led the former group, which was composed entirely of men accompanied by droves of horses, cattle, hogs, and sheep owned by all the settlers. They followed Boone's Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap and for some distance into Kentucky, and then turned to the southwest and reached the Cumberland River opposite the site of Nashville late in December, 1779. On New Year's Day, 1780, they crossed* the river on the ice—clear testimony as to the unusual severity of the weather during that winter. While waiting for the other settlers to arrive, they built a fort on the bluff overlooking the river and also a few cabins in the immediate vicinity. They named the place Nashborough in honor of General Francis Nash of North Carolina.⁵

Meanwhile, a flotilla of flatboats and pirogues had been assembled at Fort Patrick Henry to carry the remainder of the settlers to the Cumberland by the river route. The leader of this expedition was another Watauga,** John Don-

* Other settlers had joined the party en route, and some remained east of the river and founded Eaton's Station.

** See Chapter V for his migration from North Carolina to the Watauga River in 1771 to join Robertson. The Cotten Journal shows that he remained a resident of the Watauga Valley until the migration to the Cumberland. Matlock to Folmsbee, March 3, 1960.

elson, who made a significant contribution to history by keeping a "Journal of a Voyage . . . in the good boat Adventure [his flagship] . . ." Among the passengers of the several boats were not only Donelson's own family—including his daughter, Rachel, who later married Andrew Jackson—but also the families of James Robertson and of the other men who had gone overland. They departed on December 22, 1779, but after traveling only three miles the expedition was held up for two months because of the "fall of water and most excessive hard frost." Both at Cloud's Creek and the mouth of the Clinch other boats joined the flotilla. On March 7 the travelers camped at a Chickamauga town which the Indians had evacuated, and Mrs. Ephraim Peyton gave birth to a child. The next day this new-born babe became one of several casualties, however, when the boats were attacked by Indians while struggling with the serious navigation hazard called the "Suck," near which was an inhabited Chickamauga town. One boat, which was separated from the others because of a case of smallpox, was captured by the Indians. According to tradition, the Chickamauga tribe soon thereafter suffered a serious epidemic.

Upon reaching the head of the Muscle Shoals, Donelson looked for signs of James Robertson, who had promised to explore the country between the Cumberland and the Shoals to determine whether it would be practicable for the Donelson party to make the remainder of the journey overland. Actually, Robertson had not made this exploration, perhaps assuming that because of the severity of the weather the expedition had not left Fort Patrick Henry. Finding no signs, Donelson continued the journey by water. The passage over the Shoals was an exciting experience. As described by Donelson,

When we approached them they had a dreadful appearance to those who had never seen them before. The water being high made a terrible roaring, which could be heard at some distance among the drift-wood heaped frightfully upon the points of the islands, the current running in every possible direction. Here we did not know how soon we should be dashed to pieces, and all our troubles ended at once.

Although once more attacked by Indians, who wounded five men, the voyagers made the journey from the foot of the Shoals to the mouth of the Tennessee without serious difficulty and arrived there on March 20. At that point several boats departed for destinations other than Nashborough. Since the water in the Ohio was high and the boats were "not constructed for the purpose of stemming a rapid stream," others now selected the easier course down the Ohio and Mississippi to Natchez or went to the Illinois country. Donelson and the others determined to continue the journey to Nashborough, although provisions were exhausted and "the crews almost worn down with hunger and fatigue." It required nearly four days to cover the twelve miles on the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland and a month, even with the aid of a small square sail,

to ascend the river* to the bluff on which Robertson had built his fort. On April 24 Donelson made his final entry:

. . . It is a source of satisfaction to us to be enabled to restore to him [Robertson] and others their families and friends, who were intrusted [*sic*] to our care, and who, some time since, perhaps, despaired of ever meeting again. . . .

By the spring of 1780 there were two or three hundred settlers in the Cumberland Valley, scattered among several stations. The most important was Nashborough. Also on the southern bank of the river were stations called Fort Union, Freeland's, and Donelson's, which was at the mouth of Stones River. Across the Cumberland from Nashborough was Eaton's Station, and to the northeast in what is now Sumner County there were three settlements—Mansker's Lick, Bledsoe's Lick, and Station Camp Creek (Asher's).⁷

These settlements were within the bounds of Washington County, North Carolina, but since they were separated by two hundred miles of wilderness from the county seat, they were in effect outside the effective jurisdiction of that county. In a situation somewhat similar to that of the Wataugans in 1772, the Cumberland settlers reached a similar solution—the organization of a temporary “Association”*** for the maintenance of order, under the Cumberland Compact. This document,⁸ drafted on May 1 and amended on May 13, vested governmental authority in a committee of twelve “Judges” or “Triers,” who were apportioned among the eight stations and were subject to recall—a very modern concept. These judges were authorized to try ordinary criminal cases, but for very serious offenses the accused were to be taken under guard to some place where a legal trial could be held. In view of the Indian danger, each station was empowered to elect its own militia officers, who were to maintain discipline and if necessary impress horses into service. An integral part of the compact was the provision for a land office at which the settlers might purchase land from the Transylvania Company. The price per hundred acres was twenty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four pence “current money,” but was subject to change in view of the rapid fluctuations in the value of the depreciated currency of the Revolutionary period. Also, payment was not to be made unless North Carolina should recognize the company's title to the land purchased at Sycamore Shoals. In due time 256 names were signed to this document, and as amazing testimony of the literacy of the signers, only one of them signed by using a “mark.”***

* At the mouth of the Red River Moses Renfroe and others disembarked and established a settlement near the site of Clarksville, but it was soon destroyed by Indians.

** The settlers recognized the jurisdiction of North Carolina and asked that state to create a new county for their government.

*** It is, of course, possible that some of the names were written by others without use of the mark. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 168.

Indian Troubles—The making of a white settlement on the Cumberland, far beyond the previous frontier, was rendered possible by the fact that there were no Indian towns near by. The area was frequented, however, by hunting parties of several tribes, and it was not long before Indian raids became prevalent. The first Indians to cause the settlers trouble were the Chickasaw, who after remaining neutral in the British-American struggle for some time, went to war against the Americans in the spring of 1780, after the Virginians had built Fort Jefferson near the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi without getting Chickasaw consent.* The first attack destroyed the Renfroe settlement at the mouth of the Red River, and then the Chickasaw began to raid the stations farther up the Cumberland. They were soon joined by other Indians, the Choctaw, Creek, Shawnee, Delaware (some of whom were living in the Chickasaw country at that time), and Chickamauga. It became necessary for the settlers to concentrate in the two or three strongest forts, like Nashborough, and to abandon temporarily the other stations. Attempts to harvest the crops in the outlying settlements were rendered unsuccessful by Indian raids. For example, a party attempting to bring in corn from Donelson's "Clover Bottom" land on Stones River was ambushed and suffered many casualties. Food was scarce and the settlers became largely dependent on meat supplied by hunting. But hunting as well as defense rapidly depleted the supplies of ammunition and Robertson had to go to Kentucky for more powder. On the night of his return, in January, 1781, he stopped at Freeland's Station, where his wakefulness enabled him to arouse the garrison in time to repel an unexpected Chickasaw raid. On April 1 Nashborough itself was invested by Chickamaugans under Dragging Canoe. The next morning, Robertson and party of twenty mounted men were ambushed and cut off from retreat to the fort in what was called the "Battle of the Bluffs." Fortunately, the Indians' attention was distracted by the panicky horses, from which the men had dismounted, and by a pack of dogs which Mrs. Robertson had the presence of mind to release from the fort, and most of the men were able to get back safely.**

Because of the Indian difficulties the settlements on the Cumberland were almost abandoned. John Donelson and his family moved to Kentucky, and many others followed their example and departed. It was mainly due to Robertson's influence that enough settlers decided to remain to keep the settlement in existence. Robertson also was able to negotiate peace with the Chickasaw, since Fort Jefferson had been evacuated following an attack and siege by the Indians.

* Governor Thomas Jefferson of Virginia erroneously believed the fort was on Cherokee rather than Chickasaw land. After learning of his mistake, he still justified the fort by claiming the Chickasaw had previously begun hostilities against the Virginians. Cotterill, "Virginia-Chickasaw Treaty," 484.

** An interesting eyewitness account is J. W. L. Matlock (ed.), "The Battle of the Bluffs, From the Journal of John Cotten," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (Sept. 1959), 252-65.

Two years later this peace was formalized by a treaty between Virginia, represented by Joseph Martin and John Donelson, and the Chickasaw, and signed at Nashborough in November, 1783. The Indians refused to cede western Kentucky, but they agreed that the northeastern limit of their domain was the watershed between the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, thus abandoning any claim that they may have had to the Cumberland Valley.⁹

During the period of the most serious Indian difficulties government under the Cumberland Compact was largely suspended and power was concentrated in the hands of the military authorities. On January 7, 1783, however, the members of the committee met and recommended that "now, having a little respite granted, and numbers returning to us," government under the compact should be resumed. Accordingly, they elected Robertson chairman; Andrew Erwin clerk; and John Montgomery, sheriff. For about seven months, until Davidson County was created, this committee governed the Cumberland settlements. As revealed by its records, it held trials for breach of the peace, breach of contract, trespass, etc.; provided for the opening of roads; fixed the price of liquor brought in "from foreign parts"; and attempted to regulate trade with the Indians.¹⁰

Land System; Davidson County—The validity of land titles in the Cumberland Valley was subject to doubt until it should become known whether or not North Carolina would recognize the legality of the Transylvania Company's purchase at Sycamore Shoals. In 1780 and again in 1782 North Carolina, in making provision for the setting up of a military reservation for the location of land bounties to soldiers, ignored the company's claim. As finally determined and surveyed, the reservation covered approximately the upper half of Middle Tennessee*—thus including the greater part of the area of the Sycamore Shoals purchase which lay in North Carolina. According to the act of 1782 the bounties to soldiers ranged in size from 640 acres for a private to 12,000 acres for a brigadier general. General Greene was given a special grant of 25,000 acres. Preemption rights to 640 acres were granted to each head of a family or single man who had settled on the land before June 1, 1780. Finally, in 1783, North Carolina followed Virginia's example and declared null and void the Transylvania Company's title; but admitting that the company's purchase "may save the State some expense in attaining peaceable possession from the Indians," it compensated Henderson and his associates with a grant of 200,000 acres in Powell Valley. Of this amount, however, 10,000 acres were to go to the heirs of John Carter and Robert Lucas, who had acquired the so-called "Path Deed" from Henderson in 1775.¹¹

Meanwhile, the committee of the Cumberland Association, meeting on March

* The boundary of the military reservation began where the Cumberland River crossed the Virginia line, ran south for fifty miles, then west to the Tennessee River, and down that river to the Virginia line.

15, 1783, had thanked the legislature for granting preemption rights and petitioned for the establishment of county government and the location of a land office in the Cumberland Valley. James Robertson presented this petition in person and achieved immediate success. An act creating Davidson County,* to include approximately the upper half of what is now Middle Tennessee, was approved by the governor on May 17. The county court was authorized to appoint an entry taker, who was to receive entries for lands granted under the preemption provisions. The first meeting of the county court was held on October 6, and among its first acts were provisions for the building of a courthouse and a jail. The name of the county seat, Nashborough, was changed the next year to Nashville, and commissioners were appointed to lay off two hundred acres at the Bluff "in lots of *one acre* each, with *convenient* streets, *lanes*, and *alleys*; and reserving *four* acres for the purpose of public buildings."** These lots were to be assigned to subscribers by means of a lottery. Thus the Cumberland settlement, after four years of trials and dangers, had acquired reasonable prospects of security and permanence.¹²

* Named for General William Davidson. It is difficult to say whether it was created out of Washington County or Greene County. The immediately preceding act passed by the legislature, but which was signed on the same day, May 17, 1783, created Greene County (named for General Greene), to include all of what had been Washington County west of the new line dividing Washington and Greene. James Iredell, *Laws of the State of North Carolina* (Edenton, 1791), 473-74. There is considerable disagreement, even among modern writers, concerning the dates of legislative creation of these two counties.

** The italics are Putnam's. *Middle Tennessee*, 214.

CHAPTER VII—NOTES

1. Wirt Armistead Cate, "Timothy Demonbreun," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (September, 1957), 214-27; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 100-103; Dawn, 324-25; Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, III, 1-9.
2. Lester, *Transylvania Colony*, 255-58; Archibald Henderson, "Richard Henderson: The Authorship of the Cumberland Compact and the Founding of Nashville," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (September, 1916), 159-67. According to a Cumberland petition of April, 1782 (recently discovered by Robert Quarles in the North Carolina Archives, Raleigh) the delay in making the settlement was due to Virginia's reserving the area for her Revolutionary soldiers. Robertson was sent "with Instruments" to determine the latitude of French Lick, and he found it to be "a considerable distance within the limits of North Carolina." The writer is indebted to Jesse C. Burt, Jr., of Nashville, for a copy of this petition.
3. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 125-26; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 90-91; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I, 171-72.
4. Lester, *Transylvania Colony*, 259-67; Henderson, "Richard Henderson," 165-67; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 117-22; St. George L. Sioussat (ed.), "The Journal of Daniel Smith," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (March, 1915), 40-65.

5. A. W. Putnam, *History of Middle Tennessee; or, Life and Times of General James Robertson* (Nashville, 1859), 65-67; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 104-09; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 100; W. W. Clayton, *History of Davidson County, Tennessee* (Philadelphia, 1880), 19-20.
6. This journal is in the possession of the Tennessee Historical Society, Nashville, and has been printed verbatim in Ramsey, *Annals*, 197-202; Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 69-76; Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 231-42; and Clayton, *Davidson County*, 20-23. See also Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 149-66; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 100-104.
7. Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 86; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 115, 168; Clayton, *Davidson County*, 32.
8. A somewhat mutilated copy is in possession of the Tennessee Historical Society, Nashville. It is printed in Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 94-103, and Clayton, *Davidson County*, 33-36. The document is in Judge Henderson's handwriting and almost certainly was drafted by him, although Robertson and Donelson may have contributed some of the ideas. Henderson, "Richard Henderson," 170-72. See also Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 167-70; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 105-06.
9. *Ibid.*, 106-09; Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 104-62, 194-200; Clayton, *Davidson County*, 29-32, 39; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 171-79, 236-40; Robert S. Cotterill, "The Virginia-Chickasaw Treaty of 1783," *Journal of Southern History*, VIII (November, 1942), 483-96.
10. "Records of the Cumberland Association," *American Historical Magazine*, VII (April, July, 1902), 114-35, 254-66; Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 182-202; Clayton, *Davidson County*, 36-39.
11. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 213-16, 225-27; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 110-11; Lester, *Transylvania Colony*, 269-74; William H. Masterson, *William Blount* (Baton Rouge, 1954), 69-71.
12. Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 186-214; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 111; Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 233-34. Two recent accounts of the Cumberland settlement are in Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 252-79; Jesse C. Burt, Jr., *Nashville: Its Life and Times* (Nashville, 1959), 1-18.

CHAPTER VIII

The Lost State of Franklin

ORIGINS—According to the treaty of peace of 1783 which ended the Revolutionary War, thirteen states, loosely united under the Articles of Confederation, were recognized as independent. The western boundary of the new nation was to be the Mississippi River. The southern boundary began where the 31st parallel crosses the Mississippi and ran eastward, with some variations, to the Atlantic Ocean; but this boundary was for many years disputed with Spain, which had conquered the British colonies of East and West Florida during the war. Several of the states, including North Carolina, which had possessed what were called “sea to sea” charters as colonies, claimed land as far west as the Mississippi River. North Carolina’s western claim, as mentioned above, was present-day Tennessee. The small states which did not have any western claims naturally advocated that all the claims to land west of the mountains should be ceded to the central government for the common good, and the ratification of the Articles of Confederation was held up until there were indications that cessions would be made. Congress in 1780 and again in 1782 urged the claimant states to cede their western lands and promised to create new states out of the regions ceded. On January 2, 1781, Virginia offered to cede with some conditions its claim to the territory north of the Ohio River,* a cession which was eventually accepted by Congress on December 22, 1783. Meanwhile, separate statehood movements were developing among the people of southwestern Virginia, under the leadership of Arthur Campbell, and in Kentucky. Although those regions were not included in the Virginia cession, the people of both areas sent statehood petitions to Congress in 1782. The activities of Arthur Campbell stimulated inhabitants south of the Virginia line in what is now East Tennessee, and it seems that his purpose was the creation of a new state which would include eastern Tennessee as well as southwestern Virginia. Thus was germinated the idea which was to grow into the state of Franklin.¹

North Carolina naturally had to take under consideration the cession of its western lands. In 1782 two of its delegates to Congress, William Blount and Hugh Williamson, favored cession as a means of reducing the state’s share of the national war debt, quotas for which were determined by the amounts

* On the basis of a clause in its charter reading “west and northwest” Virginia claimed not only West Virginia and Kentucky but also the region north of the Ohio River.

of land in the several states. Governor Alexander Martin opposed the idea and the matter was postponed. One result of the postponement was the allowance of time for the adoption of a policy, for which William Blount and his fellow-speculating brothers (John Gray and Thomas) were largely responsible, whereby when the state eventually did make its cession of unappropriated lands west of the mountains, very little land of any value was still unappropriated. Millions of acres by that time had been acquired by wealthy land speculators and millions more were reserved for land bounties to soldiers, most of which also fell into the hands of speculators. Mention has been made of the acts of 1782 providing for military bounties and for the setting up of the Military Reservation in Middle Tennessee. The next year most of the remainder of what is now Tennessee was made available for sale under a law which has been called by one author the "Great Land Grab" of 1783. With one exception, this law ignored completely the Indian title to the land claimed by the Cherokee and Chickasaw nations, under the alleged justification that these Indians had become allies of the British during the Revolutionary War.* The one exception was the "Cherokee Reservation"—land actually occupied by the Cherokee, south of the French Broad and Big Pigeon rivers and east of the Tennessee. With this exception, and also of the Military Reservation, all the remainder of the unoccupied land in what is now Tennessee was made available for purchase at a price of ten pounds (the equivalent in specie of about five dollars) per hundred acres. In order that cheap money would be available for these purchases, £100,000 of paper money were issued by the state. Although the land office, conveniently located at Hillsboro, remained open only seven months, nearly four million acres of land were entered, and the foundations were laid for large fortunes of several future Tennesseans. On December 8, 1783, Governor Martin wrote to the North Carolina delegation in Congress: "I can venture to say there will be no cession of land worthy of acceptance, as the principal lands will be entered before this reaches you."²

After Congress had accepted Virginia's cession in December, 1783, and had passed Jefferson's ordinance** for the creation of new states in the West in April, 1784, the North Carolina legislature passed its first cession law (soon to be repealed) on June 2. The act provided that the land ceded should not be considered in ascertaining North Carolina's proportion of the war debt; the lands set aside for the state's officers and soldiers should inure to their benefit; the territory should be formed into one or more states; and no legislation should

* It was the expressed intention of the state, however, to negotiate treaties later by which compensation would be made for the land taken. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 57 n.

** In his report to Congress Jefferson had divided the Western country into eighteen prospective states, one of which would comprise eastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia.

be enacted tending to emancipate slaves. Congress was given one year in which to accept the cession. A later law, which also closed the land office for western entries, provided that North Carolina's sovereignty over the territory and its inhabitants should continue in effect until the cession should be accepted. The representatives in the legislature from the region being ceded were divided evenly on the measure.* Among the reasons for western opposition probably was the realization that financing a new state would be exceedingly difficult in view of the fact that North Carolina had already pocketed much of the revenue available from the sale of land. The westerners were also irritated by one of the arguments used by the easterners in favor of the cession—that it would be good riddance of the inhabitants of the western country, composed mainly of “offscourings of the earth” and “fugitives from justice.” On the other hand, in view of North Carolina's neglect of western interests, it was believed that if the western region were not ceded, its growth and development would be hampered and its commerce on the Mississippi strangled by Spain.³

The Establishment of the State—On August 23, 1784, a convention representing the militia companies of the counties of Washington, Sullivan, and Greene,** met at Jonesboro (then spelled Jonesborough). John Sevier presided and Landon Carter served as secretary. The convention adopted the report of a committee headed by William Cocke, which declared it expedient that the three counties form an association for the purpose of organizing a new state and asserted the right to petition Congress to accept the North Carolina cession and countenance the setting up of a separate government. The influence of Arthur Campbell is shown by the expression of willingness to include in the new state any contiguous part of Virginia which might be legally permitted to join. A second convention was scheduled to meet on September 16, but it did not meet until November and then broke up in confusion—an indication that the people were far from being united on the question. The convention eventually met on December 14, with John Sevier again serving as president, but Francis A. Ramsey*** was chosen secretary. William Cocke and Joseph Hardin, as a committee to determine a plan of action, brought in a report in favor of separate statehood.

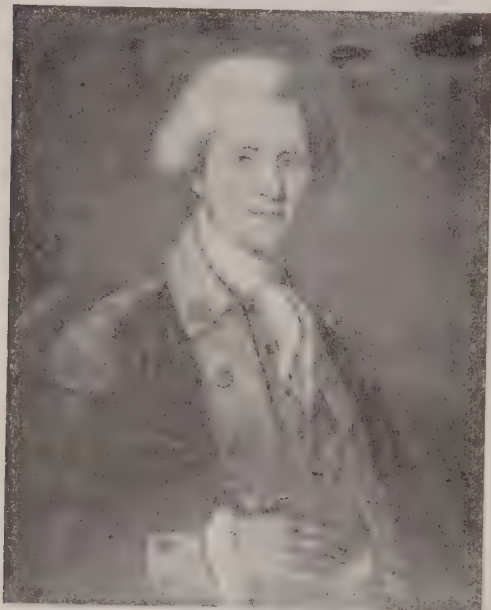
Among the arguments presented was the hope that such action would not only tend “to keep a circulating medium of gold and silver among us,” but also “draw it from many individuals living in other states, who claim large quan-

* Charles Robertson of Washington County, Joshua Gist of Greene, and David Looney of Sullivan voted in favor. Landon Carter of Washington, William Cage of Sullivan, and Elijah Robertson of Davidson voted against it.

** Davidson County, separated by distance and a mountain barrier from these counties, took no part in the state of Franklin movement. Actually, under the Jefferson scheme it was designated as a different state.

*** The father of the historian, Dr. James G. M. Ramsey.

tities of lands that would lie in the bounds of the new state." The report also criticized as unjust a recent North Carolina tax law which taxed western lands equally with those in the settled eastern country, even though they were not "one fourth of the same value." Cocke's motion in favor of a new state was passed by a vote of 28 to 15. The convention then adopted a provisional constitution for the "State of Franklin," closely modeled after the North Carolina



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

John Sevier

constitution of 1776. It was prefaced by a declaration of independence, which gave five reasons for separation. (1) The North Carolina constitution provided for the creation of new states with the consent of the legislature, and such consent was implied in the cession act, which had made the influence of law "almost a nullity" and "reduced us to the verge of anarchy." (2) The detaining of a quantity of goods procured for the purchase of their lands from the Indians has exasperated those Indians to the point of committing hostilities. (3) The resolutions of Congress regarding the creation of new states supplied "ample encouragement." (4) Their local situation was such that "almost every sensible, disinterested traveler" had declared it incompatible with their interest to be united with the eastern part of the state, since

they were so far removed and "separated from them by high and almost impassable mountains." (5) Their lives, liberties, and property would be better protected by separation.⁴

Meanwhile, on November 20, the North Carolina legislature, newly elected during the summer, had repealed the cession law; but communications during those times were so slow that the people west of the mountains did not learn of this action until after the adjournment of the December convention. Hugh Williamson was one of the leading advocates of repeal, giving as the principal reason the failure of the cession law to give North Carolina credit for the expenses of Indian expeditions in determining the state's obligations to the federal government. It is likely, however, that his large acquisitions of land in western Tennessee under the "Land Grab Act" gave him a more personal reason, as he and other land speculators appear to have believed that their land titles would

be safer under state than under federal control.* Equally significant was the fact that the Radical party, which opposed the cession, had obtained control of the legislature by a considerable majority. Leading Radicals, such as William R. Davie, called attention to the large western holdings still claimed by Virginia and Georgia, and argued that North Carolina's western lands were a leading resource for the reduction of the state's debt without which there must be a burdensome increase in taxes. Also, the cession law would permit the "aggrandizement of a few land Jobbers" at the expense of the "great body of claim holders." Probably aware of the separate statehood movement, the legislature attempted to conciliate the western people. It divided Morgan District, of which they were a part, and organized the four counties of Washington, Sullivan, Greene, and Davidson into a new district named Washington. This meant that the westerners would be entitled to have a superior court judge, to which post David Campbell was appointed. Also, the militia of the four counties was organized into a brigade, and John Sevier was appointed as its commander with the rank of brigadier general. Since the repeal of the cession again made Indian affairs the responsibility of the state, Governor Martin appointed Caswell and William Blount to act with him as a commission to negotiate with the Cherokee.⁵

When this news arrived, Sevier and others believed that the separate statehood movement should cease. Sevier, elated by his new appointment, wrote to a friend on January 2, 1785:

I have just received certain information from Col. [Joseph] Martin, that the first thing the Assembly of North Carolina did was to repeal the Cession Bill, and to form this part of the country into a separate District, . . . which I have the honour to command, as general. I conclude this step will satisfy the people with the old state . . .⁶

Although elected to preside at each of the Franklin conventions which had been held, Sevier, it seems, had been reluctant from the beginning to participate in the movement. It interfered with a scheme of land speculation in which he had become involved. In 1783 a land company had been organized in North Carolina by Richard Caswell, William Blount, John Sevier, and others interested in the Muscle Shoals region in northern Alabama, then a part of the western claim of the state of Georgia.** At the headwaters of navigation of the Tennessee

* William Blount, on the other hand, appears to have maneuvered the passage of the cession law in the belief that the land titles would thereby be made more secure and profitable rather than the reverse, and has been credited with being more farsighted than Williamson in this regard. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 55.

** It was also thought at the time that South Carolina might have a claim to it, but as brought out in the first chapter of this work, South Carolina's western claim was geographically nonexistent.

River, that country was a particularly desirable spot for land speculation. In the same year, acting as representatives of the company, Joseph Martin and John Donelson had made a private purchase of a large tract of land near the Shoals from the Cherokee Indians. William Blount induced the Georgia legislature to create a county—later named Houston—to include that region and to promise the company a large grant of land. The speculator's influence is shown by the fact that most of the county officials appointed were members of the company—John Sevier was to be colonel of the militia—and the land office was located at the Long Island of the Holston, where Joseph Martin had a trading post. Plans were made for the sale of land and the establishment of a settlement near the Shoals, but the rise of the state of Franklin movement interrupted those proceedings.

Unable to check the Franklin movement, Sevier assumed the leadership of it, apparently in the hope that in some way the existence of the new state might be used as a means of reviving and advancing the Muscle Shoals project. On December 20, 1784, only one week after the provisional constitution of Franklin had been adopted, a resident of the area wrote to a friend in Virginia, expressing the view that the new state was controlled by "a few crafty land-jobbers, whom you know, who are aiming at purchasing the great bent* of Tennesee [*sic*] from the Indians, and if not successful that way, to contrive a quarrel, and drive the natives (Cortez-like) out by force."⁷ Upon hearing the news of the repeal of the cession law, Sevier again attempted to check the new state movement, since it would divert energy and attention from the Muscle Shoals scheme, but again he failed. He later claimed that he was "dragged with the Franklin measures by a large number of people,"⁸ the most persuasive of whom probably was William Cocke. He therefore reassumed the leadership and directed the new state's course in a way which would advance the interests of the Muscle Shoals speculators. It is significant that no specific boundaries of Franklin were ever set forth in any of the state's documents, and the only clue as to intentions is found in a memorial to Congress from the southwestern Virginians who wished to join, which suggested a boundary which would include the Great Bend of the Tennessee. Also, as will be noted later, the Indian policy of the state of Franklin seems manifestly designed, "Cortez-like," to drive the natives, if possible, beyond the Shoals.⁹

The fact that Sevier was unable to stop the Franklin movement indicates that the separatist sentiment was very strong on the frontier. The West desired to free itself from control by the East in both governmental and economic matters. It wished to be free to expand, to regulate Indian affairs, and to control the land for the profit of its own people.¹⁰ As a result of Sevier's opposition, the first general assembly of the state of Franklin was not held until March,

* The great sweep of the Tennessee into Alabama was frequently called the "Great Bend" or the "Great Bent" of the Tennessee.

1785, at Jonesboro, but then it elected Sevier as governor, probably without opposition. David Campbell became chief justice of the superior court; Landon Carter, secretary of state; and Stockley Donelson, surveyor general. Among the laws passed by this first assembly were acts to confirm land titles under North Carolina laws; to re-incorporate Samuel Doak's school, Martin Academy, previously chartered by North Carolina in 1783; to establish a militia, with Daniel Kennedy and William Cocke as brigadier generals; to create four new counties, named Spencer, Caswell, Sevier, and Wayne*; "to ascertain the value of gold and silver foreign coin, and the paper currency now in circulation in the State of North Carolina, and to declare the same to be a lawful tender in this State"; and legislation providing for the levying of taxes and the payment of salaries. The frontier nature of the state is shown by provisions of the last-mentioned laws. Obviously because of the scarcity of money of any type and the prevalence of barter in the carrying on of ordinary trade, taxes were made payable in the produce of the country. The commodities mentioned, which were to be accepted at fixed rates of exchange, were good flax linen, woolen and cotton linsey, beaver, otter, raccoon, fox and deer skins, woolen cloth, tallow, beeswax, country made sugar, rye whiskey, peach and apple brandy, and tobacco. Salaries were to be paid in these "specific articles as collected" or in "current money** of the State of Franklin."¹¹

Efforts to Gain Recognition—While the Franklin assembly was in session it received from the governor of North Carolina a request for information concerning the statehood movement. In reply the legislators admitted that they had declared themselves "a free and independent State," but insisted that they had no idea that they would incur "the least displeasure from North Carolina." They expressed the hope that the mother state would facilitate their "reception into the Federal Union," but even if their "sanguine hopes" were blasted they were determined never to desert "that independence which we are bound by every tie of honor and religion to support." Finally, they asked "the impartial world" to decide whether they had "deserted North Carolina or North Carolina deserted us." They appended to their reply the Franklin declaration of independence. The first response from Governor Martin came in the form of a "manifesto" of April 25 asking the people to return to their

* Wayne County included a portion of Wilkes County, North Carolina, and Sevier lay entirely south of the French Broad River in the Cherokee Reservation created by North Carolina.

** This would include the foreign (mainly Spanish) coins and paper currency mentioned above, sometimes called in contemporary documents "prock" money because its rate of exchange with English money was determined by proclamation. A year later Col. Charles Robertson was authorized to coin \$30,000 in specie, but it is practically certain that no coins were ever minted in Franklin by Robertson or anyone else.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—Tennessee Supreme Court Building

allegiance to North Carolina. He contended that any implied consent to separation had been rescinded by the repeal of the cession law, and he threatened that North Carolina would "regain her government over the revolted territory or render it not worth possessing." Copies were sent to Sevier's jealous rival, John Tipton,* who secretly replied to the Governor with protestations of loyalty to North Carolina. Governor Sevier replied to the manifesto with a proclamation of May 14 enjoining the people to be loyal to the state of Franklin. On the same day he wrote to the new governor of North Carolina, his friend and fellow-speculator, Richard Caswell. Caswell's reply of June 17 was somewhat noncommittal. Since the special session called by Governor Martin had not met, because of lack of a quorum, Franklin's case would have to await

* The reason for Tipton's opposition to the state are not clear. It may have been, as Abernethy (*Frontier to Plantation*, 81) suggests, because he was identified with a different group of land speculators.

the regular meeting of the next assembly. He entreated Sevier not to consider his letter "as giving countenance" to the Franklin measures.¹²

Meanwhile, William Cocke, commissioner of the state of Franklin, had reached New York. On May 16 he presented to Congress a memorial from that state and also a petition from the deputies of Washington County, Virginia, dated April 7, 1785. It was this latter petition which, as mentioned above, included a proposed boundary for the new state which would include not only southwestern Virginia but also the "Great Bend of the Tennessee."* The Franklin memorial was immediately referred to a special committee, which reported on May 20 that Congress had the right at any time within one year after the passing of the cession act to accept the cession and that no subsequent law of the state could repeal or make void that right. Consequently, the committee recommended that Congress should "accept the cession of western territory made by the State of North Carolina" Seven states voted in favor of this recommendation and only two against it, but it was defeated because it failed to receive the favorable votes of nine states required for passage. The Congress then voted unanimously to request North Carolina to evince the spirit of "magnanimity and justice" by rescinding the repeal law and by executing a deed of the ceded territory to the United States. Although the Franklin memorial failed of success, the North Carolina delegation was seriously discomfited. One of its members, Hugh Williamson, reported to Caswell that the measure accepting the cession would have passed had not "some gentlemen who wished very much for the cession" been "unwilling to give offense to a State that is admitted on all occasions to be observant of federal measures." By so narrow a margin did Franklin fail to become the fourteenth state.¹³

A second session of the Franklin legislature was held in August at Jonesboro. It passed a resolution designed to assure North Carolina that any public money in the possession of the fiscal agents of that state would not be withheld for the use of the Franklin government; and it authorized the appointment of a commissioner to the North Carolina general assembly who was to try to obtain consent to the establishment of a new state. Possibly with a view to gaining the support of North Carolina land speculators, it provided for the creation of another county south of the French Broad River to be named for William Blount, and it passed a law to provide encouragement of an expedition to take possession of the Bend of the Tennessee under titles obtained (by the North

* The western boundary, according to that petition, would run from the junction of the Elk River with the Tennessee, up the Elk to the meridian which would strike the Ohio River at the mouth of Salt River, and along that meridian northward to the 37th parallel. See map in McGill, "Franklin and Frankland: Names and Boundaries," opposite p. 248. Campbell's efforts to include southwestern Virginia came to a sudden end when Governor Patrick Henry induced the Virginia legislature to declare such activity "high treason."

Carolina company) from the state of Georgia. The mission of Thomas Stuart, who was appointed commissioner to the North Carolina assembly, was fruitless. That legislature, under the control of the Radical party rather than of Governor Caswell, not only refused to consider the congressional request for a re-cession, but also resumed the efforts to stir up sedition against the Franklin government. Those Franklinites willing to return to their allegiance to North Carolina were offered pardons, and the opponents of the new state were encouraged to hold elections of representatives to the North Carolina assembly.¹⁴

Dissension within Franklin was further stimulated by a bitter controversy which arose in the constitutional convention which met in November at Greeneville, which now became the new capital of the state. The committee appointed to draft a frame of government, headed by the Reverend Samuel Houston,* submitted a constitution for the "State of Frankland" which had been drawn up by Houston's former teacher, the Reverend William Graham, president of Liberty Hall College (now Washington and Lee University) of Lexington, Virginia. That document was quite radical in character and aroused vigorous opposition on the floor of the convention led by another former student of Graham's, the Reverend Hezekiah Balch, who later founded Greeneville College (the beginning of the present Tusculum). Somewhat strangely for a future educator, Balch, who was merely a spectator rather than a delegate, objected chiefly to a clause providing for the levying of a special tax to support a state university. Even though Houston agreed to the deletion of this tax clause, the whole constitution was rejected. John Sevier then proposed that the existing fundamental law—the constitution of North Carolina as adopted provisionally by the December, 1784, convention—be made permanent. The Houston faction sought to amend it by incorporating "some material parts of their plan, viz., a single house of Legislation, equal and adequate representation, the exclusion of attorneys from the Assembly, etc.," but without success. They were able, however, to keep the question open by amending Sevier's motion so as to provide that the existing frame of government should be the constitution of the state until it was "received into the Federal Union; or a majority of the freemen of the State of Franklin shall otherwise direct." They also obtained permission "to enter upon the Journal, their dissent," which was signed by nineteen members.** The two factions now went before the people in a pamphlet war, and the controversy raged for many months.¹⁵

Historians disagree as to the reasons for the rejection of the Houston constitution. For many years it was generally believed that the chief reason was its extreme religious character; but a recent historian¹⁶ has pointed out that

* A cousin of the Sam Houston of Tennessee and Texas.

** Included, in addition to Houston, were David Campbell and John Tipton (who served as a delegate in spite of his promise to the North Carolina governor, or possibly to create dissension).

the religious features were not much different from those of the North Carolina constitution, which required officeholders to believe in God, the Protestant "Religion," and the divine inspiration of the Bible. Houston (or Graham) merely added belief in the Trinity and the further requirement that no one should be eligible for civil office "who is of an immoral character, or guilty of such flagrant enormities as drunkenness, gaming, profane swearing, lewdness, Sabbath breaking, and such like." Even though this last restriction would make many politicians pause, the democratic features of the Houston instrument were even more remarkable for that day and time; and the above-mentioned historian came to the conclusion that its rejection was an example of the defeat of democracy on the frontier. In addition to the features mentioned in the Houston "dissent," the constitution provided for universal manhood suffrage, then practically unknown in America, and for the popular election of the governor, executive council, and county officials instead of election by the legislature. Elections were to be by ballot following a registration of voters; a popular referendum was required before enactment of general laws; and justices of the peace were required to be scholars and to serve without pay. Moreover, the executive council, called "Council of Safety," was given extensive investigatory powers with a view "that the freedom of this commonwealth may be preserved inviolate forever"; and the aim of the constitution, according to its supporters, was to "secure the poor and the ruled from being trampled on by the rich and the rulers."¹⁷ It is quite probable that these democratic features contributed to the constitution's defeat, but the fact that they were even seriously proposed is ample testimony as to the democratic sentiments of the westerners. It is also possible that the conflicting religious doctrines of the orthodox Presbyterian, Houston, on one hand, and the avowed Hopkinsian, Balch, on the other, may have played an important part in the controversy.* Regardless of motivation, the resulting dissension contributed materially to the failure of the state of Franklin.

The first instance of actual interference with the exercise of jurisdiction of the new state occurred in August, 1786. The "Tiptonites" held elections in Washington and Sullivan counties to name representatives to the North Carolina assembly. In order to show their strength the Franklinites in Washington County held a similar election on the same day but at a different place and

* Joshua W. Caldwell, *Studies in the Constitutional History of Tennessee* (Cincinnati, 1907), 55, suggests that it might have been possible under the Houston constitution to restrict officeholding to the "entirely orthodox." The views of Dr. Samuel Hopkins, accepted by Balch, included the "willing to be damned" doctrine—that one should be willing to be a reprobate, if necessary, to advance the glory of God. Allen E. Ragan, *History of Tusculum College, 1794-1944* (Greenville, 1945), 6-8. Balch may have feared that anyone tainted with Hopkinsianism might be excluded from office on the ground that he was "of an immoral character."

gave Landon Carter and Thomas Chapman a much larger vote* than that cast for the Tiptonites, Richard White and James Stuart. When the North Carolina legislature convened, however, White and Stuart were seated by the lower house. John Tipton, whose election the Franklinites had not opposed, was allowed to take his seat in the senate; and he used his influence to prevent the legislature from giving favorable consideration to the eloquent appeal of William Cocke, special commissioner of the state of Franklin, for recognition of the new state. The legislature merely held out the hope for eventual separation whenever the "wealth and numbers of the citizens on the western waters so increases as to make the same necessary." In order to strengthen the North Carolina faction it gave full pardon to those Franklinites who had returned to North Carolina allegiance, remitted taxes for the past two years in the disaffected region, created a new county named Hawkins out of the western part of Sullivan, and declared vacant the offices of those who had accepted positions under Franklin. This last included Sevier, who was replaced as brigadier general of the Washington District by Evan Shelby. The legislature also granted an extension of time for the completion of surveys of western lands. The attitude of the North Carolina Radicals is indicated by a letter from one of their leaders, General Thomas Person, to James Robertson soon after the legislature had adjourned. He promised that in the next assembly "we will do the best we can to open the land office once more and grant out all the [remainder of] the western country; and leave Congress no hopes of obtaining it from us to whom it justly belongs, that is to say, the State." He favored separate statehood for the west, but not until North Carolina had reaped every possible benefit from its exploitation of western land.¹⁸

Meanwhile, a situation of the utmost confusion had developed in the Franklin area, with rival bands of Franklinites and of their opponents attempting to seize control of the machinery of government. There were inevitable conflicts, including the breaking up of courts and the seizure of courthouses and of papers, with many valuable historical documents becoming lost as a result. There also arose a personal feud between John Sevier and John Tipton, who on one occasion, when they happened to meet in Jonesboro, became engaged in personal combat and had to be separated by friends. Although Governor Caswell wrote in conciliatory terms to both Sevier and David Campbell, suggesting that agreement among the westerners was necessary if they wished to obtain consent to eventual separation, the action of the North Carolina legislature served to intensify the dissension. It led many supporters of Franklin to conclude that separation could be attained only by prior submission to North

* They were given 254 votes, whereas only 179 votes were cast in the North Carolina election. This indicates the relative strength of the two factions in Washington County. Greene County, however, was so loyal to Franklin that the North Carolina faction did not even attempt to hold an election there.

Carolina and they returned to their allegiance to that state. Others, however, were enraged by North Carolina's policy. As expressed by David Campbell:

. . . Many, who were formerly lukewarm, are now flaming patriots for Franklin. Those who were real Franklinites, are now burning with patriotic zeal. They say that North-Carolina has not treated us like a parent, but like a step-dame. She means to sacrifice us to the Indian savages; she has broke our old officers [Sevier, for example], under whom we have fought and bled, and placed over us many men unskilled in military achievements, and who were none of our choice.¹⁹

Some Franklin leaders proposed that agreement could be obtained among the westerners, as advocated by Caswell, by the process of exterminating the opposition. And when the Franklin legislature voted to call out the militia, ostensibly for an Indian campaign, outright hostilities between the militia organizations of the two rival governments in the area appeared imminent. Governor Sevier, however, refused to countenance such activity and instead negotiated on March 20 an agreement with the opposing commander, General Shelby of the North Carolina militia, which temporarily forestalled bloodshed. The terms of the agreement reveal the confusion which existed. It was provided that civil suits should not be carried to a "final determination" unless the parties were "mutually agreed thereto." The inhabitants were to pay their taxes either to North Carolina or to Franklin. Since criminals had been profiting from the confusion, it was agreed that any person convicted of a felony by a North Carolina justice of the peace could be imprisoned in a Franklin jail. Finally, it was agreed to refer the question of separation to the next general assembly of North Carolina.²⁰

Some ardent Franklinites refused to abide by the agreement and it was soon terminated. William Cocke induced Sevier to take a stronger stand in a letter to Caswell, which was very critical of North Carolina's policy. Fearing for the safety of the militiamen under his command, General Shelby called on Caswell for troops, but the Governor wisely refused to comply. The use of military force, even if the state had been in a position to exercise it, probably would have galvanized western resistance to the point that North Carolina never would have been able to recover control over the rebellious country. Instead, Caswell sent an open letter to the inhabitants appealing to them to let animosities subside until the next meeting of the legislature. He also wrote to Sevier, saying that he could not account for the conduct of the assembly at its last session and reaffirming his belief in the logic of separation. He again recommended unanimity as the only means by which it could be effected.

Another Franklin convention at Greeneville in May finally made the provisional constitution permanent, but also submitted several amendments to the voters for approval. At this convention a long debate occurred on the question

of future strategy. Cocke argued that if the western country could be represented in the next North Carolina assembly by friends of the new state instead of by its enemies, such as John Tipton, the legislature would be much more likely to consent to separation. He therefore proposed that Franklinites should become candidates for membership in the North Carolina legislature in the August election. His motion was vigorously opposed by Sevier and others, who contended that such a policy would be self-defeating, that Franklin must maintain its position of equality with North Carolina at all costs. Cocke withdrew his motion and the convention voted to send another commission to the North Carolina legislature.

Before the elections efforts were made to work out a compromise with the "Old State" party regarding representation, but they were unsuccessful. The Franklinites then fell back on Cocke's strategy. In Greene County (North Carolina), where the Old State party was very weak, the Franklinites completely controlled the elections and elected Daniel Kennedy and David Campbell to the legislature, and they were permitted to take their seats. In Hawkins there was so much confusion in the contest between Stockley Donelson (Franklinite) and the Old State candidate, Thomas Amis, that the election was declared void and neither was seated. In Sullivan the Franklin plans were foiled by the tearing up of tickets and the insistence upon the payment of taxes to North Carolina as a qualification of voters. In Washington County John Sevier claimed election and was urged by Governor Caswell to attend, but the prospect of a joint campaign (which actually failed to materialize) with Georgia against the Creek Indians led him to decide not to go. Landon Carter contested John Tipton's reelection to the senate, and as a sop to the Franklinites the senate refused to seat that most inveterate enemy of the Franklin cause.

Before this assembly convened in November the last hopes of the state to gain recognition on a national level had been blasted by the decision of the Constitutional Convention meeting in Philadelphia to include in the new Constitution a clause providing that no state can be divided without its consent. Luther Martin of Maryland and other delegates from small states made specific references to the state of Franklin in their arguments against the adoption of that clause, but to no avail. While the convention was in session Governor Sevier received a letter from one of the delegates, Benjamin Franklin, in whose honor the state had been named. Whereas a year earlier Franklin had written to William Cocke suggesting that the state refer its dispute to a decision of Congress, he now advised Sevier to apply to North Carolina for a satisfactory compromise. Under the circumstances, however, there was less necessity for North Carolina to consider any compromise. Its assembly again disregarded a request from Congress to cede the western lands; and it rejected another appeal for recognition from a Franklin commissioner, Francis A. Ramsey, even though he was authorized to offer that the new state would assume North

Carolina's Continental debt. The legislature continued to follow the conciliatory policy of offering pardons to the Franklinites. Even David Campbell was now lured away from his support of the state of Franklin and induced to assume the office of judge under North Carolina, a post to which he had been again elected. The state of Franklin had about run its course.²¹

Relations with the Indians and with Georgia—When the state of Franklin came into existence, relations with the Indians were seriously strained. As soon as the Revolutionary War was over, white people began to move in considerable number beyond the Indian boundary line of 1777. The Cherokee protested repeatedly to Colonel Joseph Martin, North Carolina's agent in that nation. When the North Carolina land act of 1783 was passed, which provided for the Cherokee Reservation south of the French Broad and Big Pigeon rivers, Martin apparently assured the Cherokee that in exchange for their consent to settlement between the 1777 line and the French Broad River the remainder of their hunting grounds would be completely closed to white settlement. It was not long, however, before settlers were busy establishing homes south of the French Broad, and agents of land speculators were making surveys of land outside of the Reservation. Governor Martin was authorized to negotiate a treaty with the Cherokee, but since no appropriation was made for the purpose, the treaty was delayed. Before the treaty could be made, North Carolina had ceded its western lands to the United States, June 2, 1784, and thereby shifted the responsibility for Indian relations to the Confederation government. Responsibility returned to the state with the repeal of the cession, but by that time the organization of the state of Franklin and the appointment of federal commissioners to treat with the Indians further complicated the situation.

The first assembly of Franklin authorized Governor Sevier to negotiate with the Cherokee Indians, and on May 31, 1785, Sevier and his fellow commissioners met with several chiefs and eventually induced them to sign the Treaty of Dumplin Creek. The Indians agreed, so the Franklinites reported, "that all lands . . . on the south side of Holston and French Broad rivers, as far south as the ridge that divides the waters of Little River from the waters of [the Little] Tennessee, may be peaceably inhabited and cultivated" Whether this agreement could be considered an outright cession of land may be doubted. Also, according to the version of Chief Old Tassel, submitted to Governor Caswell a few months later, only a few "young men" met with the Franklin commissioners and agreed to allow "those that were living on the lands, to remain there, till the head men of their nation were consulted on it" The attendance at Dumplin Creek of the respected elder chieftain, Old Abram, and the signing of the treaty by "The King" of the Cherokee, however, indicates that Old Tassel's statement was not entirely accurate. The treaty, whether legal or not, was followed by a rapid migration of Franklinites

into the region south of the French Broad, necessitating the creation of a second Franklin county, named Blount, in that area in 1786. This southwestern migration was not confined to the Cherokee Reservation. James White, Francis Ramsey, and others settled in 1785 in the forks of the French Broad and Holston rivers; and the next year White established a settlement called White's Fort at the site of Knoxville, where he had purchased a large tract of land under North Carolina's "Land Grab Act" of 1783. A settlement was also planned at the Bend of the Tennessee on the land acquired by the Martin-Donelson purchase for the Muscle Shoals Company in Houston County, Georgia. Near the close of 1785 Sevier sent a large expedition to the Bend, which opened a land office and issued warrants for a large number of acres of land. The settlement was abandoned, however, because of the hostile attitude of the Indians.²²

A major reason for the stiffening of the Cherokee attitude was the signing by United States commissioners at Hopewell, South Carolina, of a very lenient treaty in November, 1785. Joining the federal agents at Hopewell was one of North Carolina's commissioners, William Blount, who hoped to be able to sign a treaty between his state and the Cherokee before the federal negotiations were concluded, but the goods accumulated for that purpose did not arrive in time. He also learned, to his dismay, that the federal commissioners, under the leadership of Benjamin Hawkins and Andrew Pickens,* were determined to permit the Indians to make their own terms, probably because of their apprehensions concerning the efforts of the Spaniards in Florida to obtain control of the Southern tribes. The proceedings soon became, in the words of Blount's biographer, "a land speculator's nightmare." Asked to define their own boundaries, the Cherokee chiefs were not modest. Although they reluctantly confirmed, in modified form, the Transylvania Purchase of 1775, to the eastward they insisted that the treaty lines of 1777 be followed. It will be recalled the Avery line of that year ran a few miles east of Greeneville. Thus the Hopewell treaty put the town which had just been made the capital of the state of Franklin in the Indian country. The treaty repudiated by name that state's Treaty of Dumplin Creek and also nullified the private purchase of the "Great Bend" lands, North Carolina's contention that the Revolutionary War had ended all Indian titles in her western claim,** and even the French Broad River boundary of her "Cherokee Reservation" of 1783. Moreover, the treaty provided that any settler in the Indian country who refused to remove within six months would forfeit the protection of the United States, and "the Cherokees may

* The others were Joseph Martin and Lachlan McIntosh.

** At a subsequent treaty at Hopewell early in 1786 the Chickasaw confirmed the Nashborough Treaty line of 1783, but received recognition of their title to western Tennessee and Kentucky and northern Alabama and Mississippi, except for a tract of land five miles in diameter given to the Americans for a trading post at the foot of the Muscle Shoals.

punish him or not as they please." The only exception was for the "three thousand" inhabitants in the forks of the French Broad and Holston rivers, whose status was to be fixed by Congress. During the negotiations Blount submitted a vigorous protest saying that his state would consider the treaty a violation and infringement upon her legislative rights, but to no avail.²³

The Indians were blindly confident that the United States government which had "conquered the King of England" would be able to enforce the treaty. They did not realize that in relation to the several states and the restless frontiersmen the Confederation Congress was practically powerless. By the spring of 1786 the Indians were on the warpath, and the state of Franklin retaliated with expeditions into the Cherokee country. In August, William Cocke, Alexander Outlaw, and other commissioners appointed by the Franklin legislature forced* the Cherokee chiefs Old Tassel and Hanging Maw to sign what became known as the Treaty of Coyatee by which the Indians agreed to permit settlement north of the Holston and Little Tennessee rivers. The Franklin government immediately opened a land office for the sale of land as far south as the Little Tennessee.

Although Governor Caswell continued to issue proclamations ordering the Franklinites to remove from the Indian country (as interpreted by North Carolina to be south of the French Broad and Big Pigeon rivers), he also wrote to Governor Sevier in July, 1786, "The Bent [Bend] of Tennessee is still an Object with me of an Interesting Nature" Two or three months before that date war had broken out between Georgia and the Creek Indians, who were the chief claimants** to the land in the Muscle Shoals area. Plans were being developed for a joint campaign by Georgia and Franklin against the Creeks, with the understanding that the Franklinites would be granted land at the Bend of the Tennessee in exchange for their services. Such a campaign might have saved the declining state of Franklin as well as the fortunes of the Muscle Shoals speculators, but it never materialized. For nearly two years the Georgia policy shifted repeatedly between war and peace with the Creeks until the war plans were finally abandoned early in 1788. During that time the prospects of such a joint campaign kept the flickering hopes of the state of Franklin alive. As late as November 28, 1787, Sevier distributed copies of a circular to the Franklin militia describing the prospective land bounties, ranging from 640 acres for a private to 1,200 for a colonel and to 1,500 for a major general.²⁴

* That the treaty was signed under duress is indicated by the fact that the commissioners in effect told the Indians that the country would be settled whether the Indians liked it or not. Confronted by a large military force the chiefs could do little else but agree. Ramsey, *Annals*, 343-46.

** The Cherokee title was dubious, based mainly on the fact that the Chickamauga branch were the Indians who lived nearest to the Shoals. The Chickasaw also claimed part of the region, but the Creeks claimed all of it. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 59.

The last days of the state of Franklin were characterized by almost continuous Indian warfare. Not only were there numerous raids on the frontier by the Creeks and the Chickamauga, but the upper Cherokee also engaged in hostilities. They repudiated the Treaty of Coyatee and called on the federal government to enforce the provisions of the Treaty of Hopewell. The Franklinites retaliated with repeated campaigns into the Indian country. The upper Cherokee appear to have been on the point of abandoning their homes along the Little Tennessee when an outrageous incident precipitated a general war. Angered by the failure of the whites to remove from their country within six months, as promised at Hopewell, a group of Cherokee under the leadership of Slim Tom massacred the family of John Kirk, located within nine miles of the Little Tennessee River. One son, John Kirk, Jr., was away at the time and escaped death. He joined a retaliatory expedition headed by John Sevier, which, after ravaging the Indian towns along the Hiwassee River, returned to the Little Tennessee and invited the Cherokee chiefs, including the peacefully inclined Old Tassel, to come in under a flag of truce and negotiate. While Old Tassel and several others were in the camp for that purpose, but while Sevier happened to be absent, John Kirk, Jr., still obsessed with rage, entered the unguarded tent and tomahawked each of the unarmed and unresisting Indians. Although Sevier denounced the act, the general reaction throughout the nation was extremely unfavorable to him and to the new state movement.

In the general war with the Indians which followed, the white settlements south of the French Broad narrowly escaped complete destruction. After an army under General Joseph Martin was defeated near Lookout Mountain, the Indians organized a force of about 1,600 men, including 400 Creeks, for a general invasion which would have been very difficult to repel. After a massacre at Gillespie's Station, near the mouth of Little River, in October, 1788, the whole frontier was in a state of panic. But suddenly the invasion was called off and the Indian army disbanded. Hanging Maw, the new principal chief of the upper Cherokee, had arrived from Hopewell, South Carolina, where he had been shown a congressional proclamation dated September 1, 1788, ordering white settlers to remove from the Cherokee hunting grounds or remain "at their peril." The Indians interpreted this to be a solemn promise from the United States that the Treaty of Hopewell would now be enforced, and they "laid down the hatchet," again placing mistaken confidence in the ability of the federal government to fulfill its engagements. By this turn of events the host of settlers who had moved into the Cherokee country under state of Franklin treaties escaped what otherwise would have been certain devastation.²⁵

Collapse of the State; the "Lesser Franklin"—In August, 1787, the Franklin legislature, instead of reelecting Sevier to the governorship, chose General Evan Shelby instead, for the term beginning March 1, 1788. Shelby declined,



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Knox County Court House

but because of his longstanding attachment for Sevier he resigned his post as brigadier general under North Carolina and recommended that Sevier be elected in his place. The North Carolina legislature, however, named Joseph Martin. The election of Shelby had been an act of desperation on the part of a Franklin government which was nearing the end of its rope. Outside of the lower tier of counties south of the French Broad, on land which North Carolina recognized as Indian country, support of the new state movement had dwindled dangerously.

Early in 1788 the feud between Sevier and Tipton flared to the point of actual hostilities. Apparently embittered by the refusal of the North Carolina legislature to give him his seat, Tipton had returned to Washington County determined to destroy the last vestiges of the state of Franklin. Raids on the Franklin courts were resumed, and the resisting Franklinites were forced to retreat to Greeneville. Then Sheriff Jonathan Pugh, under Tipton's orders, seized some of Sevier's slaves in satisfaction of a court judgment and took them to

Tipton's home (near the site of Johnson City) for safekeeping. Sevier organized a force of about fifty men for the purpose of recovering them but found the Tipton home well fortified and guarded. A skirmish occurred during a blinding snow storm. Sheriff Pugh was killed, but the Tiptonites captured several of Sevier's force, including two of his sons. After Sevier had retreated, Tipton released his prisoners. He had at first wished to hang Sevier's sons but had been deterred from doing so by Colonel Thomas Love. The intervention of General Martin of the North Carolina militia helped to bring hostilities to an end. By that time Sevier's term as governor of Franklin had expired, and as he did not attempt to serve any longer in that capacity, the new state was now leaderless. Sevier, however, still considered himself commander in chief of the Franklin army for the Indian campaigns which have already been described.

In the spring of 1788 Sevier, it seems, was nearly ready to make his peace with North Carolina, but was reluctant to desert his ardent supporters south of the French Broad. Those people still were unwilling to give their allegiance to the state of North Carolina, which refused to recognize their titles to the lands they were occupying. Then, on July 29, the new governor of North Carolina, Samuel Johnston, ordered the arrest of Sevier on the charge of high treason. Under the circumstances, it is understandable why Sevier responded to the overtures of an agent of the Spanish minister and decided to engage in the Spanish intrigue which will be discussed in the next chapter. John Tipton, acting for a North Carolina judge, finally succeeded in arresting Sevier on October 10 and took him across the mountains to Morganton for trial. There General Charles McDowell, one of Sevier's fellow commanders at King's Mountain, signed his bail bond and obtained his release from custody. Soon his western friends rode over the mountains to rescue him and were permitted without interference to escort him back home. Although Sevier's case actually never came to trial,* he wrote bitterly to the North Carolina assembly protesting about his mistreatment.²⁶

By this time the state of Franklin was dead except in the region of the Cherokee Reservation south of the French Broad, where it held on as a "lesser Franklin" for a period of a few months. In contrast to the many Franklinites who had settled between the French Broad and the Holston rivers, where land titles could be obtained under North Carolina's laws, the settlers east of the Holston and south of the French Broad could not obtain legal titles to their lands except under the authority of the state of Franklin. North Carolina considered them outside that state's jurisdiction, in the Indian country, and

* According to Williams, *State of Franklin*, 227 n., the picturesque account given by Ramsey, *Annals*, 428-29, of Sevier's rushing out of the courtroom, jumping on his horse, and, with his rescuers, outdistancing the pursuers, is not authentic. It is based on the second-hand account of William Smith, whereas the report of John Sevier, Jr., one of the rescuers, is more reliable.

repeatedly ordered them to move. Their status under the federal Indian policy was even worse, for the Treaty of Hopewell line ran far to the northeast, on the other side of Greeneville. The situation was complicated by the fact that the convention called by North Carolina to consider ratifying the new federal constitution, which met in July, 1788, voted against ratification, and North Carolina for the time being was outside the federal union.

The people south of the French Broad were in a situation somewhat comparable to that of the Wataugans in 1772, and they resorted to similar solutions to their problems. In January, 1789, they held a meeting to agree upon some plan of defense and created a council of safety for that purpose. John Sevier was recognized as commander and given authority to hold talks with the Indians. Commissioners were appointed to go to Congress and to the Cumberland settlement, and plans were made to petition North Carolina to make a new treaty with the Cherokee and also to cede the western lands to the United States. At the same meeting or a later one the French Broad settlers adopted "Articles of Association" similar in nature to the Watauga Compact. Instead of adopting the laws of Virginia, however, they chose those of North Carolina, and they agreed to make a united application to the next general assembly of that state "to receive us into their protection." Meanwhile, the officers of the state of Franklin were to continue to exercise their functions. Fearing that horse thieves and other fugitives from justice might seek an asylum in their country, since they were "destitute of a regular government and laws by which they may be punished," they mutually obligated themselves to assist the officers of any state or of the United States in apprehending such fugitives.

To what extent John Sevier was identified with this "Association" is uncertain. At the February, 1789, term of the Greene County court he took an oath of allegiance to North Carolina, and he was elected by the people of that county to the state senate. Although he had been specifically barred from officeholding by a North Carolina law, he was allowed to take his seat when the assembly convened. That assembly also declared that he was entitled to the position of brigadier general of the Washington District under the commission issued at the time of his original appointment in 1784.²⁷

Thus the conciliatory policy of North Carolina which had been so successful in destroying the state of Franklin was finally extended even to its leader, who was permitted to assume a position of power in the same government which he had tried to disrupt. Even the aim of separate political identity—and not merely for the Franklin area but for all of the present Tennessee—was soon to be realized through the medium of territorial government; and that development also brought to an end the intrigues of the future Tennesseans with the Spaniards. Although the state of Franklin failed due to inability to gain recognition and because of dissension within its own ranks, the idea of a separate state for what is now East Tennessee did not die. Several times in

later history, especially in 1841-1842 and again during the Civil War and Reconstruction periods, the proposal of creating a separate state out of this region received serious consideration.²⁸

CHAPTER VIII—NOTES

1. Samuel C. Williams, *History of the Lost State of Franklin* (Johnson City, Tenn., 1924), 5-12; Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 244-72.
2. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 49-58; Masterson, *William Blount*, 59-70; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 18-21.
3. *Ibid.*, 21-25, 27; St. George L. Sioussat, "The North Carolina Cession of 1784 in its Federal Aspects," *Mississippi Valley Historical Association Proceedings*, II (1908), 35-62; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 55-58; Masterson, *William Blount*, 85-86; Driver, *John Sevier*, 82-84; Lefler, *North Carolina*, I, 268.
4. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 116-19; Driver, *John Sevier*, 85-87; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 25-33, 38-43. For the text of the constitution and declaration of independence see *ibid.*, 330-38.
5. *Ibid.*, 34-37; Driver, *John Sevier*, 85; Masterson, *William Blount*, 94-95; Blackwell P. Robinson, *William R. Davie* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1957), 169-71.
6. Ramsey, *Annals*, 291.
7. Quoted in Arthur P. Whitaker, "The Muscle Shoals Speculation, 1783-1789," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIII (December, 1926), 371.
8. Driver, *John Sevier*, 87.
9. *Ibid.*, 87-88. The best treatment of the relationship between the state of Franklin and the Muscle Shoals speculation, is Whitaker, "The Muscle Shoals Speculation," 365-86, but see also Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 119-20; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 13-17, 52 n., 54.
10. Walter Faw Cannon, "Four Interpretations of the History of the State of Franklin," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 22 (1950), 3-18, includes an analysis of the diverse viewpoints of historians concerning the origins of the state. Like most modern historians he prefers the "separatist" view expounded by Frederick J. Turner, "Western State Making in the Revolutionary Era," *American Historical Review*, I (October, 1895), 70-87, and by Williams and Driver. See also Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 280-310.
11. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 54-64; Paul M. Fink, "Some Phases of the History of the State of Franklin," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (September, 1957), 200-204.
12. Ramsey, *Annals*, 306-17; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 60-78.
13. *Ibid.*, 79-86. Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 372; J. T. McGill, "Franklin and Frankland: Names and Boundaries," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, VIII (January, 1925), 248-57.
14. Masterson, *William Blount*, 98; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 87-89.
15. *Ibid.*, 90-94, 145, 330-38 (the provisional constitution of Franklin); Haywood, *Civil and Political History*, 170-72; Fink, "Some Phases," 204-07; Ramsey, *Annals*, 322-34. Ramsey includes most of the Houston constitution; but it is printed in its entirety, along with the "dissent," in "The Provisional Constitution of Frankland," *American Historical Magazine*, I (January, 1896), 48-63, reprinted in *Tennessee: Old and New*, I, 13-26. It was the wide distribution of that con-

stitution during the "pamphlet war" which led Haywood and others to conclude erroneously that the real name of the state was "Frankland." McGill, "Franklin and Frankland," 248-49.

16. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 76-79.
17. "Provisional Constitution of Frankland," *passim*.
18. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 104-05; also his "Western Representation," 109, 111.
19. To Caswell, March 18, 1787, Ramsey, *Annals*, 355.
20. The text of the agreement is in *ibid.*, 259.
21. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 110-92.
22. *Ibid.*, 13-17, 75-78; Downes, "Cherokee-American Relations," 40-42; Ramsey, *Annals*, 318-19, 369-72; Stanley J. Folmsbee and Lucile Deaderick, *The Founding of Knoxville* (Knoxville, 1941—reprinted from E.T.H.S. Publications, No. 13), 3-4; Haywood, *Civil and Political History*, 164-73; Driver, *John Sevier*, 71-72, 89; Masterson, *William Blount*, 108; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 243-44, 251.
23. *Ibid.*, 248-51; Merritt B. Pound, *Benjamin Hawkins-Indian Agent* (Athens, Ga., 1951), 35-52; Masterson, *William Blount*, 104-06; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 152-58; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 95-97; Charles J. Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (3 vols., Washington, 1892-1913), I, 40-52, II, 8-16.
24. Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 375-76; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 102-03, 110, 174-77, 184-87.
25. *Ibid.*, 205-12; Downes, "Cherokee-American Relations," 46-50.
26. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 158-60, 193-204, 226-28; Driver, *John Sevier*, 92-98.
27. *Ibid.*, 32-33, 99-100; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 213-25, 241-47.
28. *Ibid.*, 275-81, contains a convenient summary of these later proposals. An even more recent example occurred in 1959, because of the failure to reapportion legislative districts since 1901, but it naturally did not receive serious consideration.

CHAPTER IX

The Intrigue with Spain

ORIGINS OF THE INTRIGUE—It has been claimed by some historians¹ of the state of Franklin that the aim of the movement almost from its beginnings was separation from the United States as well as from North Carolina. It is very doubtful that such was the original purpose of the new state movement, but by 1786 dissatisfaction with the policies and weakness of the Confederation Congress had led to a consideration of the idea. This was but a part of a general tendency toward secession which characterized much of the American West at that time, including the Kentucky and Cumberland settlements. This secession tendency was accompanied by intrigues with the Spaniards, who occupied the territory along the Gulf of Mexico and west of the Mississippi River and had a great influence on the destinies of the American frontiersmen. The origins of the Spanish intrigue are therefore closely linked with Spanish policies concerning the American West and the course of Spanish-American relations.

During the treaty negotiations at Paris at the close of the American Revolution Spain tried unsuccessfully to have the territory of the new United States limited to the region east of the Appalachian Mountains. Instead, as previously mentioned, Great Britain agreed to an American boundary following the Mississippi River on the west and the 31st parallel line on the south. The British treaty with Spain, however, permitted that nation to "retain" her conquests of the British provinces of East and West Florida. Spain's policies after the war continued to be motivated by the realization that the American settlements west of the mountains constituted a serious danger to the security of her Florida and Louisiana colonies. Consequently, the chief aim of her policies was to keep those aggressive frontiersmen from expanding southward and westward in the direction of her possessions.

There were four means by which Spain attempted to achieve that result. First, she presented an exaggerated claim as to the extent of her possessions east of the Mississippi, contending that they were bounded by the Ohio, Tennessee, Hiwassee, and Flint rivers. Under such a boundary all of what is now West Tennessee and the southern corner of East Tennessee would be under the Spanish flag. Second, she closed the Mississippi River to navigation by Americans, with a view to stifling the growth of the settlements west of the mountain barrier, since they were so largely dependent on the use of that river as

an outlet to market. Then she negotiated treaties of alliance and protection with the Creek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw* Indians. In order to prevent the trade of those Indians from falling into the hands of American traders, the Spaniards permitted Pantón, Leslie and Company, the well-established English trading concern headed by William Pantón, to continue to operate on Spanish soil and to expand its operations. This group of traders was closely associated with the mixed-breed chieftain of the Creek Confederacy, Alexander McGillivray, who was violently anti-American. McGillivray regularly warned the Spaniards about American designs against their possessions and was able to obtain, mainly through Pantón, sufficient supplies of ammunition to enable the Creeks to make frequent raids against the settlements on the Georgia and Tennessee frontiers. The fourth means adopted by the Spaniards was to give encouragement to the secessionist movements which arose in the American West.²

That the Americans were willing to initiate such an intrigue in connection with their secessionist activity was not due to any love they had for the Spaniards. The policy was based instead on the idea, "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em." The course of action which they would have preferred would have been to march down and drive the Spaniards into the Gulf of Mexico. Although some hotheads such as John Sullivan openly proclaimed that "we will speedily be in possession of New Orleans,"³ it was realized generally that the Westerners did not have the military capabilities to make such a venture successful, especially since they could not expect any help from Congress or the Eastern states. Disillusionment with both Congress and the Easterners had reached a climax in 1786. The conciliatory policy of Congress regarding the Southern Indians (illustrated by the Hopewell treaties of 1785-86) threatened the land titles of the whites, speculators and settlers alike, but even so did not prevent continued ravaging of the frontier by the savages. Then, in the summer of 1786, Secretary of Foreign Affairs John Jay proposed to Congress that he be authorized to negotiate a treaty with the Spanish representative, Don Diego de Gardoqui, by which the United States would relinquish for twenty-five or thirty years any right to navigate the Mississippi River. The West exploded with anger. One Westerner wrote: "To sell us & make us vassals to the merciless Spaniards, is a grievance not to be borne. The parliamentary acts which occasioned our revolt from Great Britain were not so barefaced & intolerable."⁴ This statement indicates that the Westerners had learned their revolutionary lessons well.

Jay's proposal and its consideration by Congress** provided the occasion

* The treaty with the Chickasaw prevented the success of an attempt by James Robertson and others to establish a settlement at the site of Memphis. Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 54.

** Jay, a New Yorker, was interested in the commercial concessions which might be obtained. The proposal received a majority vote, but the opposition of the Southern states prevented its receiving the approval of nine states, which would be necessary for the ratification of such a treaty. Eventually, the negotiations collapsed.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Rogersville—Hawkins County Court House

for what seems to have been the first suggestion of a Spanish intrigue. It came from Dr. James White,* a delegate to Congress from North Carolina who owned "large tracts of land" on the Cumberland River in the Tennessee country and was apparently fearful that a relinquishment of the right to navigate the Mis-

* He should not be confused (as many writers have done) with the James White who founded Knoxville, Tennessee. Dr. White later moved to Nashville and became the delegate to Congress from the Southwest Territory, 1794-1796. Chief Justice of the United States Edward Douglas White was his grandson. A. V. Goodpasture, "Dr. James White: Pioneer, Politician, Lawyer," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (December, 1915), 282-91.

issippi would depress land values in the West. On his own initiative he went to see Gardoqui on August 26, 1786, and again on October 4. He informed the Spaniard of the Western resentment caused by Jay's proposal and predicted that the Western settlements would surely separate from the United States and would be willing to ally themselves with either the English or the Spaniards. He intimated that Spain, by opening the river to their use, could win their allegiance forever. He planned to visit those settlements himself and perhaps go on to New Orleans. Gardoqui gave him a letter of introduction to a Spanish officer named White (who also was an Irishman) in Louisiana, but did nothing further to encourage the intrigue.⁵

Actually, White did not go to the Cumberland or to New Orleans at that time. Instead, he accepted from Congress the office of superintendent of Indian affairs in the South and engaged in ineffectual negotiations with the Southern Indians. A short time after he had resigned this position in January, 1788, he had an opportunity to renew his conversations with Gardoqui. The occasion was his receipt of a communication from Governor Johnston of North Carolina containing a number of enclosures which he was instructed to discuss with the Spanish minister. The most important enclosure was a letter in which James Robertson and Anthony Bledsoe, two members of the legislature from the Cumberland Valley, charged the Spaniards with inciting the Indians to attack the Cumberland settlements. Another was a letter from John Sevier which also criticised Spanish policies. As a result of the renewed conversations White became Gardoqui's agent to the Westerners, with especial attention to be paid to the state of Franklin, and the Tennessee intrigue with Spain was definitely under way.⁶

The State of Franklin in the Intrigue—The reason the state of Franklin was to be given primary consideration probably was because White had heard about Sevier's military defeat by Tipton and his retirement to the Indian border. Consequently, he would be the most likely to respond to Spanish overtures. By the time White had reached the Franklin country, probably in July, Sevier's prestige had temporarily increased as a result of a successful Indian campaign; and Gardoqui's proposals gave the Franklinites new hope that the dying state still might be salvaged. In his reply to Sevier's letter Gardoqui declared that it was a "malicious rumor" that Spain encouraged, as Sevier apparently had charged, "robberies by savages." Instead, "His Majesty is very much disposed to give the inhabitants of that Country [Franklin] all the protection they ask." Sevier's first reply, of July 18, has been lost, but White, who may have helped Sevier write it, later summarized its contents in a letter to Captain General Joseph de Ezpeleta, governor of Havana, Cuba, as saying that the Franklinites "wished to place themselves under the protection of the King [of Spain] through an oath of fidelity, abjuring any other power."⁷

After White had returned to New York, Sevier's fortunes took a turn for the worse. A warrant had been issued for his arrest on the charge of high treason to North Carolina, and he was being severely criticised for the Kirk episode.* In desperation he wrote two letters to Gardoqui on September 12 and dispatched them to New York, using his son James as a courier. In the longer of the two letters he wrote:

Since my last, of the 18th of July, upon consulting with the principal men of this country, I have been particularly happy to find that they are as well disposed and willing as I am in respect to your proposals and guarantees. You may be sure that the favorable hopes and ideas that the people of this country maintain with respect to the future probability of an alliance and a concession of commerce with you . . . are very ardent and that we are unanimously determined to that effect. The people of this country have come to realize truly upon what part of the world and upon which nation depend their future happiness and security, and they readily infer that the interest and prosperity of it depend entirely upon the protection and liberality of your government.

Sevier continued with references to the "delicate situation" of Franklin with respect to North Carolina, to the inability of the people to dispose of their products without the right to "make use of our rivers to the ports below," and their embarrassments because of the scarcity of money. He then appealed for a loan of a few thousand pounds, which he promised would be repaid by means of the export of produce down the rivers to the Spanish ports, if permitted. Finally, he asked for a passport to enable him to go to New Orleans if that should seem to be necessary.⁸

The shorter of the two letters, dated September 12, is even more revealing as to Sevier's motives. After describing his defeat of the Cherokee Indians and expressing a fear that they might call on the Creeks, Choctaw, and Chickasaw for help, he asked that those Indians be informed that the Cherokee were at fault in starting the war. And if the people of his country should establish settlements near the Muscle Shoals, he hoped that the Spaniards would be "gratiously disposed to reconcile the minds" of the Indians under their dominion and keep them at peace. Obviously, a major reason for Sevier's entering into the intrigue was the hope that it would facilitate the revival of the Muscle Shoals speculation. It is probable, also, that William Blount and other members of that speculating group were at least aware of Dr. White's mission. It is also possible that as speculators in Tennessee lands they hoped that the intrigue might frighten North Carolina into ratifying the Constitution and ceding its western lands to Congress.⁹

* See Chapter VIII. During an Indian campaign led by Sevier, Kirk had killed several unarmed Indians who had come in under a flag of truce.

Gardoqui sent Dr. White to New Orleans by way of Havana to plead the cause of Franklin in person. He also sent Sevier a passport by his son James, but Sevier did not make use of it. Probably he was disappointed because James had not also brought with him some money from Gardoqui. It has been suggested by one leading authority that Sevier now abandoned the Spanish intrigue except as a means of extracting from North Carolina the best terms possible for himself and his faction.¹⁰ It is just as well that he did so, for Dr. White's mission was largely fruitless. The correspondence of White and of the Spaniards with whom he came in contact is useful, however, in developing the nature of the intrigue and of Spanish reactions to it.

During his two-months stay in Cuba Dr. White, using the alias "Jacques Dubois,"* described the Franklinites proposals in considerable detail orally and in a written memorandum to Captain General Ezpeleta. In an effort to make them appealing to the Spaniards he called attention to the danger to Spanish security involved in the growth of the American settlements west of the mountains. It would be better to have those people as friends rather than as enemies. Since North Carolina had rejected the new Constitution of the United States and was temporarily out of the Union, the time was ripe for action. What the state of Franklin wanted was an alliance, commercial concessions, and the opportunity with Spanish protection to expand down the Tennessee River past the Muscle Shoals and even as far as the headwaters of the Alabama and the Yazoo rivers, in order that it might be able to use those streams as outlets to market. In exchange the Franklinites would be willing to take an oath of allegiance to Spain, provided they were, at least for the time being, permitted to retain complete control of their own domestic affairs.** Among the benefits to Spain would be the advantage gained in prosecuting her boundary dispute with the United States and many economic benefits from the trade which would result, as well as increased security for her colonies, since the other settlements west of the mountains would follow Franklin's example.

On February 21, 1789, Ezpeleta sent White at Spanish expense to New Orleans in company with Gayoso de Lemos, who was soon to become governor at Natchez.*** The Havana governor seems to have been quite favorably impressed with White's arguments and believed that Spain had "no choice but to accede to the petition." Still he advised caution and especially the restriction of "the people of Franklin to more reduced boundaries than those

* The Spanish officials, however, were apprised of his true identity.

** White explained that the first reactions of the Franklinites with whom he conferred included apprehensions concerning the illiberal policies of Spain.

*** Before taking office, however, Gayoso was expected to go incognito on a journey of inspection to Cumberland, Franklin, and Kentucky, but he did not do so because he had become acquainted with too many individuals from those areas before he could leave Natchez. Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. Publications, No. 22 (1950), 132 n.

they desire"¹¹ Gayoso was even more suspicious. After associating for more than four months with Gardoqui's agent, he wrote to the captain general of Louisiana, Don Antonio Valdés in May, 1789:

Don Diego White is thoroughly republican at heart. The movement that is taking place in the state of Franklin has as its object the establishment of independence rather than a *rapprochement* with Spain. The Franklinites know that it is to their interest to form a connection with this province [Louisiana] and they wish to do so, but they are extremely ambitious and their principal object is to extend their territory so that they may draw near the waters of the Mississippi and Mobile rivers, in the hope that this advantage will attract many immigrants from other places and enable them to build up an opulent state.¹²

About a month earlier White had made an appeal to Governor Miró of Louisiana. For the first time he included the Cumberland settlements along with Franklin in his memorial. Upon reaching New Orleans he had learned that the Cumberland leaders already had begun correspondence with the Spanish governor, and he apparently tried to claim credit for it. Miró had just received from Spain a royal order in reply to the memorial of James Wilkinson,* the Kentucky intriguer, and he decided to reply to White in the spirit of that order. Although he verbally asked White to continue to encourage the Westerners to separate from the United States, he was not very definite as to what Spain would do to help them in case they did so. In his written reply, which was in the form of a "Memorandum of Concessions to Westerners," he pointed out that since Spain and the United States were at peace, he could not promote such a separation; but if it should happen that the Westerners did obtain their independence, then "his Majesty" would grant them such favors as were "consistent with his royal bounty," and "compatible with the interests of the Crown." The immediate aim of the memorandum was to encourage the immigration of the Westerners into Spanish Louisiana, where he promised they would be granted land and allowed some measure of religious freedom, but would be required to take an oath of allegiance to Spain. The memorandum also included a statement of Spain's new policy regarding the navigation of the Mississippi River. The Americans were to be allowed to use the river subject to the payment of a 15 per cent duty, which could be reduced to 6 per cent for certain individuals. Of course, those who migrated to Spanish territory would be allowed to navigate the river without the payment of any duties.¹³

White was cruelly disappointed and disillusioned, for the Spanish reply destroyed his dream of a "Greater Franklin." The Spanish government was now planning to entice into its own territory the same people whom White had hoped to lure to the Muscle Shoals. Nevertheless, he did agree to go at Spain's

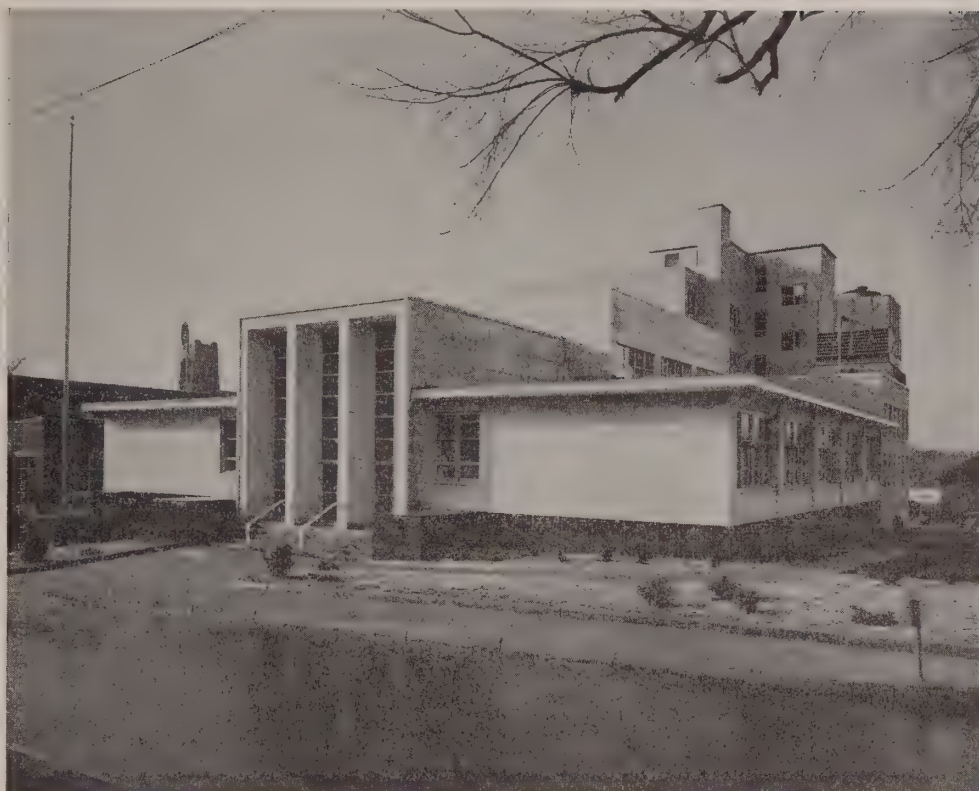
* Wilkinson had initiated the Kentuckians' intrigue with Spain in 1787.

expense to Cumberland and Franklin with Miró's reply. But after reaching the Cumberland settlements he strongly advised against the continuation of the intrigue or migration to Spanish territory, and apparently he stayed away from the Franklin area.¹⁴ Nearly a year before that time, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, John Sevier had made his peace with North Carolina, and as a member of its legislature had helped provide for a second convention to consider ratification of the Constitution. When the Constitution was ratified, North Carolina again ceded its western lands to the United States, making possible the creation of the Southwest Territory, and with those developments there was no further thought by the Franklinites of any intrigues with Spain.

The Cumberland Intrigue—The leading factor which influenced the leaders of the Cumberland settlement to engage in an intrigue with Spain, in addition to the desire for free navigation of the Mississippi River, was the danger that the small population* in the area would be wiped out by the serious Indian attacks. Separated by great stretches of wilderness from their nearest neighbors, those settlements were almost defenseless against the raids of the Creeks and the Cherokee. McGillivray, claiming to speak for both of those tribes, had protested against the existence of the Cumberland settlements as early as 1785 and had begun a savage war against them early in 1786. In July the Cumberland settlers sent two delegates to McGillivray to sue for peace, and the Creek leader reported to Miró that he had granted them a truce until the next April. But the Chickamauga element of the Cherokee took up the slack. And when, in May, 1787, six Creek warriors were killed during an attack by a force under James Robertson against the Chickamauga town of Coldwater near the Muscle Shoals, at which some French traders were operating, the Creek raids were resumed and became even more devastating. The Cumberland settlers called on both the Kentuckians and the government of North Carolina for help, but received only a handful of troops from Carolina. They considered joining the state of Franklin, when there seemed some prospect that a joint campaign with Georgia against the Creeks was to be organized; but, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, this expedition did not materialize.¹⁵ In desperation they appealed to the Indians and then to Spain.

Believing that the Spaniards were inciting as well as supplying the Indians, Robertson and Bledsoe drafted the previously-mentioned protest of January 4, 1788, which Governor Johnston of North Carolina sent to Dr. James White in New York, and which White used as a means of reopening his conversations with Gardoqui. The Spanish minister replied to both Johnston and Robertson denying absolutely that the Spaniards were responsible for the Indian

* In 1785 a Spanish agent reported that there were 4,000 inhabitants in the Cumberland settlements. Luis Chacheré to Boulogny, enclosed in Miró to Gálvez, December 10, 1785, Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. Publications, No. 9 (1937), 138-41.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Tennessee Supreme Court Building

raids, and to the latter he said he would be "very happy" to do all that he could "to serve the inhabitants of that Country."¹⁶ It has been assumed by all of the writers about the Spanish intrigue that when White went to the state of Franklin the following summer he also visited the Cumberland settlements. There is, however, no concrete evidence that he did so. His route to Franklin as described to the governor of Havana was "by Fort Pitt, going down the Ohio and across Kentucky," without any mention of the Cumberland settlements.*

* Also, Ezpeleta reported that "Mr. White treats directly . . . of Franklin only." White to Ezpeleta, December 24, 1788; Ezpeleta to Valdés, December 29, 1788, Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 139-46. To Miró in New Orleans, White merely said, "we comprehend [Cumberland] in the same view," and guessed that their correspondence with him was due to "letters brought" to Robertson from Gardoqui. *Ibid.*, No. 20 (1948), 104. He did not say he (White) had brought them. It is possible that Robertson did not receive Gardoqui's reply until March, 1789, for he did not mention it in his letters to Miró of January 29 and February 18, whereas Daniel Smith did mention it in his letter of March 11. *Ibid.*, 81, 85-86, 97.

At any rate, the Cumberland leaders made their first approach to Spain, by way of McGillivray, before Gardoqui had even received their protest. Sometime in March, 1788, shortly after James Robertson's son, Peyton, had been killed by the Indians and a neighbor's son taken prisoner, Robertson wrote a pitiful, yet eloquent letter to McGillivray and sent it to him by two emissaries named Hoggatt and Ewing.* He asked McGillivray to protect the neighbor's boy and send him home. In reply to an earlier letter in which McGillivray had complained loudly about American encroachments on Indian lands, he insisted that the Cumberland Valley had been purchased by Richard Henderson from the Cherokee in 1775. The Creek chieftain in his reply, dated April 4, brought up the killing of six Creek warriors by Robertson's Coldwater expedition, but since that affair had been "amply retaliated," he said he was willing to make peace. On April 25 he reported to Arturo O'Neill, governor of Pensacola, about these negotiations. He said that two deputies had come to him from Cumberland, representing that their people were in such extreme distress as a result of the excursions of his warriors that they were willing to submit to any conditions in order to obtain peace, and that they were willing to become "Subjects of the King [of Spain]." They said further that both the Cumberland and Kentucky settlements "were determined to free themselves from a dependence on Congress" because that body was unable to protect their persons and property or encourage their commerce. McGillivray said he had granted the Cumberland people a truce until the next assembly of the Creek nation.¹⁷

Despite these promises, the raids continued, and Anthony Bledsoe was one of the Cumberland settlers who was killed. Robertson wrote again to McGillivray on August 3, offering to give him a gun and also tracts of land in Nashville and in the Cumberland country. Along with the bribe, however, he hinted at the possibility that the Westerners might join the British in an attack on Spanish New Orleans, and he attempted to sound out McGillivray as to the possibility of the Creeks joining with them in such a campaign.** McGillivray's reply of December 1, was noncommittal, and the only remaining recourse left to the Cumberland people appeared to be a direct appeal to the Spaniards in New Orleans.¹⁸

In an effort to smoothen the way for such an appeal Robertson in November, 1788, had induced the North Carolina legislature to name the new district created

* These individuals have not been clearly identified.

** According to Whitaker, "Spanish Intrigue," 166-68, Robertson probably knew that an English adventurer, William Augustus Bowles, had entered the Creek country and had brought a supply of ammunition to McGillivray. Since Miró had temporarily cut off the Creeks' supply from Spain, there was a hope that McGillivray might be induced to desert Spain and join the British. But Miró soon promised McGillivray ample supplies of ammunition, and he quickly dropped Bowles. See also Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 78-79.

for the Cumberland Valley the "Mero District" in honor of the Spanish governor, Don Estevan Miró.* On January 29, 1789, Robertson wrote to that governor from "Miro district" that he was "happy to hear that trade is in some measure opened." "Nature," he said, "seems to have designed the whole western Country to be one people." After referring to the continued Indian hostilities, he asked Miró to recommend peace to those nations under his influence. On February 18 he added a postscript requesting a passport for his son-in-law, John Bosley, who was planning to move to Spanish Louisiana, and another for himself, in case he too should decide "to remove."¹⁹ On March 11 Daniel Smith, brigadier general of the new district, wrote Miró that it had been honored "with Your Excellency's name." He sent the letter by Don Antonio Fagot, a Spanish militia officer who claimed to be related to Miró and who desired to engage in trade between New Orleans and the Cumberland settlement. It was obviously the hope of the Cumberland leaders, as expressed in a letter from the recently-arrived Andrew Jackson to Smith, that Miró would grant his "relative" a license to trade and would then see the "propriety" of promoting peace between the Mero District and the Indians. Miró later reported** that Fagot told him that the Cumberland people were planning to ask the North Carolina legislature for permission to separate from that state and that they would then offer to place their district under the dominion of Spain.²⁰

It was Miró's replies to these letters, together with copies of his "Memorandum of Concessions to Westerners," which Dr. White took with him to Cumberland. Miró sent other letters in September by James Wilkinson. To both Robertson and Smith he elaborated on his efforts to induce the Indians to be peaceful. To Robertson he offered the passports requested and hoped that Robertson and his son-in-law would bring their families to Louisiana, where they would find everything necessary for their welfare. To Smith he expressed his appreciation of the honor accorded him and also his great interest in the plans of the Mero District to separate from North Carolina, as reported by Fagot. In his second letter he reported that Fagot was licensed and ready to receive their produce in New Orleans, subject to the 15 per cent duty,** but if they came under the dominion of Spain no duties would be collected.²¹

In most treatments of the Spanish intrigue very little attention is paid to the extent to which its real objectives were achieved, that is, commercial concessions from Spain and a cessation of the Indian attacks. Although a trade bur-

* The difference in spelling probably was due to the ignorance of the senate clerk. The district was composed of three counties: Davidson (1783), Sumner (1786), and Tennessee (1788).

** In this report to Valdés he commented rather deprecatingly about the honor of having the district named after him: "I do not think it is very thickly populated."

*** In his first letter he said that Smith personally would be entitled to a special duty of only 6 per cent.

dened with a 15 per cent duty* was not "free" navigation of the Mississippi, it was much better than no navigation at all, with boats and cargoes being seized and confiscated. And there was a noticeable lessening of the Indian raids, at least for a period of time. As early as September, 1789, Smith wrote to Miró that he was sending down the river his small crop of tobacco by James Winchester. On January 13, 1790, Robertson admitted to the Louisiana governor that the effects of his "interposition with the Savages" were already evident, as the Cumberland settlers had "received little or no injury from them for some time past." He continued: "The opening of New Orleans for our produce under the restrictions you mention must certainly be considered by us as a mark of favour for which we are grateful"; and the terms Miró had set forth in his recent proclamation "respecting Emigrants" were "exceedingly liberal" and would draw "most of the people" to Louisiana if the policies of the "states" toward the western country were not quickly improved.²²

To obtain these concessions, it is now clear, the Cumberland leaders merely pretended that they desired to place their country under the dominion of Spain, and they also opposed the alternatives of migrating to the Louisiana country. Robertson politely rejected Miró's proposal regarding his own removal; his estate in Cumberland was so satisfying that he did not wish to leave it. In this same letter of September 2, 1789, he said the Cumberland people had held a convention in which it was agreed that their members in the legislature should insist on separation from North Carolina, and he added that he could not but "wish for a more interesting Connection" than with the United States. Actually, the convention's purpose had been to secure a cession of their district by North Carolina to Congress. Daniel Smith, in a letter to Miró of September 19, was somewhat more frank. He had learned from White that Fagot had given Miró a wrong conception of the sentiments of the Cumberland people, probably because of his imperfect understanding of the English language. "The people here," he wrote, "wish to be in the Closest friendship tho' not Subject to his Catholic Majesty."²³

Another major purpose of the intrigue was to frighten North Carolina into ratifying the Constitution and ceding its western lands to the United States. It was believed that one cause of their Indian difficulties was the fact that they were not immediately under the protection of the new government under that Constitution. It is also logical to assume that the intrigue and its purposes were no secrets to prominent political leaders of eastern North Carolina. Otherwise, it

* It must be admitted that the decisions in favor of partial opening of the river and encouragement of immigration had been made by the Spanish government in Madrid before Robertson and Smith had begun their correspondence with Miró, as a result of the Wilkinson intrigue and the advice of a temporary French resident of Kentucky named Pierre Wouves d'Argès. Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 78-89, 97-103.

would not have been so easy for Robertson to get the legislature to name the Mero District in honor of a prominent official of a foreign state whose policies had been subject to so much criticism. While Robertson and Smith were corresponding with Miró, they were also writing to Governor Johnston of North Carolina warning him of the separatist feeling and the encouragement of it by the Spaniards, and also of the danger that the western district might be denuded of its population by Spain's new immigration policy. As Professor Whitaker says, "A conspirator who advertises his conspiracy is a veritable marplot new to the annals of intrigue." One of Smith's letters hinted very strongly as to the measures which would bring the intrigue to an end—ratification of the Constitution by North Carolina and the cession of its western lands to Congress. Thus, the passage of those measures late in 1789 may be considered a fulfilment of the intrigue rather than an obstacle to it.²⁴ Nevertheless, even though the basic interests and ideas of the Spaniards and of the Cumberland people were widely divergent, there still remains the unanswerable question as to what would have happened if North Carolina had not ceded its western lands. As it was, after the Tennessee country became the "Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio" and later a new state, there were no further tendencies of its inhabitants to intrigue with Spain. Instead, later conspirators such as Genêt, Blount, and Burr were able to make use of their general feeling of hostility toward the Spaniards.

CHAPTER IX.—NOTES

1. Fink, "Some Phases," 197-200; John Allison, *Dropped Stitches in Tennessee History* (Nashville, 1897), 30.
2. Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier, 1783-1795* (Boston and New York, 1927), 1-62, map opposite p. 68. Many of the documents on which this work is based, transcripts and photostats of which are in the McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, have been printed in D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt (trs. and eds.), "Papers from the Spanish Archives Relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest, 1783-1800," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, Nos. 9 *et seq.* In the first instalment is included the letter of Governor Estevan Miró, March 12, 1784, advocating the closing of the Mississippi River and advising his superiors that Spain had a good title as far north as the Ohio River because Captain Baltasar de Villiers of the Arkansas Post had crossed the Mississippi during the war and formally taken possession of all that country in the name of the King of Spain. *Publications* No. 9 (1937), 115-16. D. C. Corbitt, "James Colbert and the Spanish Claims to the East Bank of the Mississippi," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXIV (March, 1938), 457-72, contends that this Spanish claim was invalidated by the activities in that area of a British officer, Captain James Colbert.
3. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 134.
4. Quoted in Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 134.

5. *Ibid.*, 136; Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 76, 80; Gardoqui to Conde de Floridablanca (Spanish secretary of state), September 18 (enclosing "Summary of a Conversation" with James White, August 26, 1786), October 28, 1786, in Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 79-90.
6. *Id.* to *id.*, April 18, 1788, *ibid.*, *Publications* No. 17 (1945), 105-13; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 73-74, 77; Archibald Henderson, "The Spanish Conspiracy in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, III (December, 1917), 232-33.
7. *Ibid.*; Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 379. Gardoqui to Sevier, April 18, 1788, was enclosed in Gardoqui to Floridablanca of the same date, cited in note 6 above. White's reference to Sevier's reply is in White to Joseph de Ezpeleta, December 24, 1788, Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 144.
8. A re-translation into English of this letter originally translated from English into Spanish, is printed in Henderson, "Spanish Conspiracy," 234-35. The Spanish translation is given on pp. 244-45. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 232, questions the accuracy of the original translation into Spanish, suggesting that it may have been slanted. Unfortunately, the original in Sevier's handwriting has not been located.
9. Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 379. This shorter letter is printed in Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 15 (1943), 103. See also Masterson, *William Blount*, 151; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 98-99.
10. Arthur P. Whitaker, "Spanish Intrigue in the Old Southwest: An Episode, 1788-89," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XII (September, 1925), 160-61. According to Whitaker, the original of the passport is in Draper Papers, XI, DD 83a. *Ibid.*, 160 n. Henderson, "Spanish Conspiracy," 236, is in error in stating that James Sevier went to New Orleans with White.
11. Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 380-84. Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 138-46, contains Ezpeleta to Valdés, December 29, 1788, enclosing White to Ezpeleta, December 24, 1788.
12. Quoted in Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 384.
13. Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 110-11; White to Miró, April 18, 1789; Miró's Memorandum of Concessions to Westerners, April 20, 1789; Miró to Wilkinson, April 23, 1789; Miró to Valdés, April 30, 1789, Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 20 (1948), 103-07, 108-10.
14. White to Miró, April 22, 1789; Miró to Daniel Smith, April 24, 1789, *ibid.*, 105, 107-08; Whitaker, "Muscle Shoals Speculation," 385-86.
15. Whitaker, "Spanish Intrigue," 163-64; McGillivray to Miró, October 8, 1786, J. W. Caughey, *McGillivray of the Creeks* (Norman, Okla., 1938), 133; Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 253-76; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 74; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 260-69.
16. Translations of these replies, dated April 18, 1788, are printed in Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 17, pp. 112-13. The one to Robertson was incorrectly addressed to "Colonel Elisha Roverson" instead of James Robertson. The leading authority on the subject, A. P. Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 61-62, could find no evidence that the Spaniards encouraged the Creeks to engage in offensive war against the Americans; on the contrary, they actually cut down on their supplies of ammunition during the winter of 1787-1788, fearful that a general war might involve Spain. See also Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 76-77.
17. The Robertson letter is printed in "The Correspondence of Gen. James Robert-

- son," ed. by A. W. Putnam, *American Historical Magazine*, I (January, 1896), 82-84, with the editorial comment that the date was illegible but that the letter was written three days after Robertson's son had been murdered (which the editor says in his *Middle Tennessee*, 295, occurred early in March). McGillivray's reply of April 4 is in Haywood, *Civil and Political History*, 245-46, and his report to O'Neill in Caughey, *McGillivray*, 178-79. Miró, after getting this information from O'Neill, wrote Valdés, June 15, 1788, asking instructions. Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 15, pp. 91-92.
18. "Correspondence of Robertson," 81-82, 85-86.
 19. John Allison, "The Mero District," *American Historical Magazine*, I (April, 1896), 115-27; Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 19, pp. 81, 85-86.
 20. *Ibid.*, 97; Jackson to Smith, February 13, 1789, "Papers of Gen. Daniel Smith," *American Historical Magazine*, VI (July, 1901), 216; Miró to Wilkinson, April 23, 1789; Miró to Valdés, April 30, 1789, *loc. cit.*
 21. Miró to Robertson, April 20, 1789, "Correspondence of Robertson," 87-88; Miró to Smith, April 24, 1789, Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 20, pp. 107-08; Miró to Smith, September 15, 1789; Miró to Robertson, September 16, 1789, *ibid.*, No. 21 (1949), 91-92.
 22. Smith to Miró, September 19, 1789, *ibid.*, 93; Robertson to Miró, January 13, 1790, *ibid.*, No. 22 (1950), 131.
 23. *Ibid.*, No. 21, pp. 89, 93.
 24. Whitaker, "Spanish Intrigue," 171-75. Cf. Henderson, "Spanish Conspiracy," 243, who says the passage of the cession law was an "obstacle to the execution of the plans" of Robertson and his associates. For a recent account of the Cumberland and Franklin intrigues, see Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 273-79, 305-07.

CHAPTER X

The Southwest Territory

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TERRITORY—The Tennessee country became a federal territory in 1790 following North Carolina's belated ratification of the Constitution and the acceptance by Congress of that state's second cession of its western lands. In view of the fact that one of the motives behind the future Tennesseans' intrigues with the Spaniards was to bring those measures to pass, it is natural that these developments met with the overwhelming approval of the people of the transmontane counties. In the ratifying convention of 1789 only two delegates from those counties voted against ratification of the Constitution,* and in the legislature which passed the cession law of December, 1789, only two of the western members failed to vote for its passage.¹

The provisions of the cession law of 1789 were very similar to those of the 1784 measure which had been repealed, and again the directing hand of the big land speculator, William Blount, was in evidence. All land claims under North Carolina laws—including the Land Grab Act of 1783 and the several acts reserving lands for Revolutionary soldiers—were to remain valid. If there should not be sufficient good land in the Military Reservation to satisfy all the soldiers' claims, the remaining warrants could be located elsewhere in the region ceded. The law also provided that one or more new states should ultimately be formed out of the ceded country; and in the meantime the territory should be governed in accordance with the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance, enacted in 1787 by the Confederation Congress for the government of the Northwest Territory, with the one exception that no regulation should be enacted which should "tend to emancipate Slaves."** Congress accepted the cession early in 1790 and on May 26 President Washington signed "an Act for the government of the territory of the United States, south of the river Ohio."²

* In contrast, in the convention of July, 1788, which refused to ratify the Constitution, only two of the western delegates voted against postponing ratification. Those delegates included many opponents of the state of Franklin, including John Tipton; in the 1789 convention and legislature the west was represented by John Sevier and his friends.

** The Northwest Ordinance had prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territory—north of the Ohio River and west of Pennsylvania.

The title of this act and the official name of what was familiarly known as the Southwest Territory has caused confusion among historical writers. Since the present state of Kentucky is south of the Ohio River, it has been assumed by some authors that it was included in the Southwest Territory. This could not be true because that territory could not include any country which had not been ceded to the United States by a claimant state. When Virginia had ceded its western claim—north of the Ohio River—in 1784, it had retained possession of Kentucky, which consequently continued as an integral part of Virginia until it was admitted into the Union in 1792. The other error which is frequently made is to assume that the Territory included all of the country claimed by the United States under the treaty of peace of 1783 lying south of the present Tennessee. This area, much of which was disputed with Spain, was claimed by the state of Georgia, and Georgia did not cede its western lands to the United States until 1802.* Thus the region actually included within the government of the Territory of the United States, south of the River Ohio was limited to the area of the North Carolina claim, as ceded in 1789-90, or in other words the present Tennessee.³

The Northwest Ordinance provided that a territory should pass through three stages of governmental development on the way to statehood. At first the government was to be undemocratic, being in charge of appointed officials—a governor, a secretary, and three judges. When the population included five thousand free male inhabitants of voting age, the territory was to be eligible for a representative system of government, and when the total free population reached 60,000, it was to be eligible for admission into the Union. President Washington appointed William Blount as governor and Daniel Smith of Mero District as secretary. The three judges were David Campbell, John McNairy, and Joseph Anderson. The last-named, of Delaware, was chosen in the place of William Peery, who had refused the appointment. The governorship carried with it automatically the position of superintendent of Indian affairs south of the Ohio River.⁴

The territorial governor, William Blount, 41 years of age at the time of his appointment, was a distinguished political leader of his native state, North Carolina. He had served as a paymaster of North Carolina and Continental troops during the Revolution, had been elected several times to the North Carolina legislature and the Confederation Congress, and had been a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. Instead of being a product of the frontier, he was an aristocratic Easterner, somewhat inclined to be snobbish; he was a business man who had entered politics not merely to serve the public but also as a means

* There was, of course, the complication of the alleged western claim of South Carolina, represented on many maps as a narrow strip between the North Carolina and Georgia claims. It was shown in Chapter I that this claim was geographically nonexistent.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Blount Mansion

of advancing his own and his family's pecuniary interests. Together with his partner-brothers, he had acquired more than a million acres of western lands. After learning of his appointment as governor, he admitted to a friend: "... my Western Lands had become so great an object to me that it had become absolutely necessary that I should go to the Western Country, to secure them" Despite these personal aims, however, he proved to be a very capable governor, and was able to adapt himself to the wilderness environment.⁵

Governmental Developments—Governor Blount arrived in the Territory in October, 1790, and set up headquarters in the home of William Cobb in the fork of the Holston and Watauga rivers, which thereby became the temporary capital. Blount had the power to appoint all civil officials other than those mentioned above and the officers of the militia below the rank of brigadier general. On his recommendation, Washington appointed John Sevier and James Robertson as brigadier generals for the Washington and Mero districts, respectively. In

his own appointments Blount attempted to harmonize the conflicting interests of the Franklinites and the Tiptonites,* but he naturally leaned somewhat in the direction of the former. The political alliances he was able to form with Sevier and Robertson became distinct advantages. Soon after his arrival Blount traveled throughout the Territory commissioning civil and military officials and licensing attorneys.⁶

On July 2, 1791, as will be discussed later, he signed at White's Fort, the site of Knoxville, a treaty with the Cherokee Indians. In connection with the preparations for these negotiations he had selected White's Fort as the place for the permanent capital** of the Territory, and he determined to name it in honor of his immediate superior in the conduct of Indian and military affairs, the secretary of war in Washington's cabinet, General Henry Knox. This small settlement four miles below the junction of the Holston and French Broad rivers, which had been started by James White only five years earlier, was established as a town on October 3, 1791. White, who had purchased the land under the Land Grab Act of 1783, had the area adjoining the river marked off into sixty-four lots, which were disposed of at a lottery held on that date. The three individuals who conducted the lottery were designated as town commissioners. Blount took up his residence in Knoxville early in January, 1792, but his family did not join him until March. His two-story house, completed later that year, which in its restored form is now called the "Blount Mansion," probably was the first frame house built west of the Appalachian watershed. In October George Roulstone, the Tennessee country's first newspaper editor, moved the "Knoxville" *Gazette* from Rogersville, where it had begun publication on November 5, 1791, to the place named on the paper's masthead. Thus Governor Blount had his administration organ, which was to acclaim loyally his gubernatorial policies, closer at hand. In June, 1792, he created two new counties, Knox and Jefferson, within the area acquired by the Cherokee treaty, and on March 1, 1793, he organized them into a new military and judicial district named Hamilton.***⁷

In his capacity as governor Blount was called on to assist Secretary Jefferson in determining the amount of unallocated land in the Territory, and he was required by Congress to provide for the taking of a census of inhabitants. When the land survey was completed, it was revealed that there was so little

* See Chapter VIII.

** Although the location was a logical one, Blount's ownership of land in the vicinity and his friendship for James White, who owned the land in the town itself, were factors involved in the decision. Masterson, *William Blount*, 198-99; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 53.

*** Thus, with political astuteness, he honored Knox a second time and two other members of Washington's cabinet, one of whom, Jefferson, was his immediate superior in the conduct of territorial affairs, and the other, Hamilton, the leader of the Federalist party.

unallocated land to which the Indian title had been extinguished that Jefferson decided not to establish any national land office in the Territory. Location of claims under North Carolina laws continued, however, even within the Indian country, and the Governor himself did not refrain from participating in this activity. When the results of the census were reported, in September, 1791, it was revealed that there were 35,691* people living in the Territory, of whom 6,271 were free white males of voting age. Since this latter number was more than 5,000, the Territory was now entitled to have a representative government, but Blount did not provide for the election of a territorial assembly until about two years later. The chief reasons for the delay probably were his desire to retain unlimited power in his own hands and his fear that the assembly might increase the tax on land. By the summer of 1793, however, the popular clamor for an assembly had become so great that he ordered the militia officers to take a poll on the question; and on October 19 he issued an ordinance for the election in December of thirteen members of a house of representatives***

The successful candidates in this somewhat riotous election included some enemies of the Blount administration, such as John Tipton, who had come out in open opposition the year before, but the majority was friendly. The group met in Knoxville on February 24 and nominated ten men from whom President Washington subsequently selected five to constitute a council (the upper house of the legislative body); it also drafted an address to Congress advocating a war against the Creek Indians. Dr. James White took the address to Congress and helped Washington select five men who were friends of Blount to be councillors.*** The first meeting of the whole assembly occurred in August. Among its legislative acts were the legal incorporation of the town of Knoxville, the creation of Sevier County in the region south of the French Broad, and the chartering of two colleges: Greeneville, the beginning of the present Tusculum, in Greene County, and Blount, the origin of the present University of Tennessee, in Knoxville. The assembly also authorized lotteries to raise funds for the building of a road between Southwest Point (Kingston) and the Cumberland settlement and for the building of a jail and stocks in Nashville. It created a treasury department with two treasurers, one for the two eastern districts and the other for Mero. The governor and the council attempted to fix the tax rate at 12½ cents on each one hundred acres of land, which would have been to the advan-

* Of this total 28,649 (including 3,619 south of the French Broad) were in Washington District and 7,042 in Mero. The total number of slaves was 3,417. The census was slightly incomplete as a few captains had not yet filed their returns.

** In accordance with the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance, a voter was required to own at least fifty acres of land, and eligibility for election as a representative required the ownership of two hundred acres. Eligibility for appointment to the upper house required the ownership of five hundred acres.

*** The five named were Griffith Rutherford, John Sevier, James Winchester, Stockley Donelson, and Parmenas Taylor.

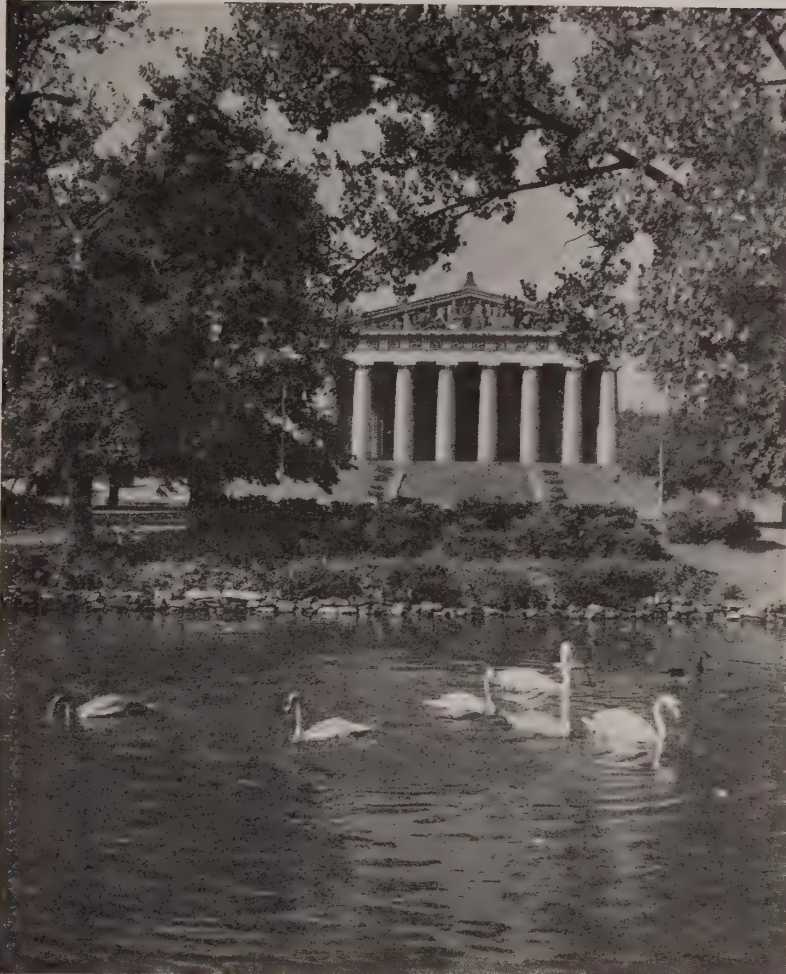
tage of the land speculators, but the house insisted on 25 cents per hundred acres. Another petition demanding a more aggressive Indian policy was sent to Congress, and also a memorial from the people living south of the French Broad River asking for preemption rights and the validation of land titles. In this second stage of government the Territory was entitled to be represented in Congress by a non-voting delegate, and the assembly elected Dr. James White to that post.*⁹

A second, special session of the assembly was called by Blount for June 29, 1795, to take action leading to the admission of the Territory into the Union, a subject which will be treated in the next chapter. In addition to passing those measures this last meeting of the territorial assembly created a second county in the region south of the French Broad River, which it named in honor of Governor Blount, and it chartered the towns of Blountville, Sevierville, Greeneville, and Clarksville. It also gave Samuel Doak's Martin Academy near Jonesboro a new charter under the name Washington College.¹⁰

The Indian Situation; Treaty of the Holston—The most serious problem facing Blount when he became governor and superintendent of Indian affairs was the Indian situation. The Creeks were temporarily quiescent as a result of McGillivray's signing of the Treaty of New York in 1790,** but the Cherokee were very troublesome. They resented the failure of the United States government to enforce the Treaty of Hopewell of 1785. It will be recalled that this treaty merely confirmed the treaty line agreed to at the Long Island of the Holston in 1777. In the east that line ran just above Greeneville, and there were thousands of settlers on both sides of the Holston as far west as Knoxville who had purchased their lands from North Carolina but were technically in Indian country. Between the French Broad and the Little Tennessee were a great number of settlers who had moved in under the authority of the state of Franklin treaties of 1785 and 1786. With the collapse of that state those treaties lost any validity which they may have had. That area had been reserved to the Cherokee Indians by the North Carolina Land Grab Act of 1783 and closed to the granting of lands, but it appears that some grants were made by the North Carolina land office in disregard of the law. In what is now Middle Tennessee the Hopewell

* Since the Northwest Territory had not yet reached the second stage of government, Dr. White was the first territorial delegate to be elected to the United States Congress. He was given a seat in the House of Representatives. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 385 n.

** Before McGillivray left for New York the Creeks attacked an expedition sent by Secretary Knox up the Tennessee River in an effort to establish trade relations with the Southern Indians. Colton Storm (ed.), "Up the Tennessee in 1790: The Report of Major Doughty to the Secretary of War," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 17 (1945), 119-32; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 83; Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 23 (1951), 77-82, 91-92.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—The Parthenon

Treaty had been more generous, confirming as had the Treaties of Long Island, the Henderson purchase of the Cumberland Valley; but the cabins south of the Duck River were outside the ceded area.¹¹

Especially bellicose were the Chickamauga Indians, who originated, it will be remembered, in the warlike group led by Dragging Canoe which seceded from the Cherokee in 1777 rather than make peace with the Americans. Although now considered again to be a part of the Cherokee Nation, they opposed the peace-minded leadership of Chief Hanging Maw. Living mainly in the "five

lower towns," including Running Water and Nickajack,* below the site of Chattanooga, they were sometimes called the "Lower Cherokee." They included quite a number of Creek Indians, and several of their towns were in Creek country, where they settled with the permission of McGillivray. Naturally, they were considerably subject to Creek and Spanish influences; and as mentioned in the preceding chapter, they joined in McGillivray's protest to the United States against the existence of the Cumberland settlers in the historic hunting grounds of both the Southern and Northern Indians. Not having been represented either at the Long Island or the Hopewell treaties, they did not consider themselves bound by those agreements; and, as has been seen, they supported enthusiastically McGillivray's design to bring about the complete expulsion of white people from the Cumberland Valley. They also stiffened the general Cherokee demand that all white settlements in the East Tennessee country below the Hopewell line should be evacuated, especially those south of the French Broad.¹²

When Henry Knox became secretary of war under Washington he railed with indignation at the humiliating spectacle of the national treaty of Hopewell being trampled on by the Tennesseans, but by January 4, 1790, he had finally come to realize the utter impossibility of removing the white people from the Indian country. He wrote to Washington recommending that a new treaty should be negotiated to adjust the boundary. On the President's recommendation and with Senate approval, Superintendent Blount was instructed on August 11, 1790, to inaugurate such negotiations with the authority to offer the Cherokee an annuity of \$1,000 in exchange for the lands to be ceded.¹³

A serious obstacle to the negotiation of the treaty arose because of Indian apprehensions concerning the activities of the so-called Yazoo land companies which had obtained immense grants of land from Georgia in 1789. One of them, the Tennessee Company, headed by Zachariah Cox, had obtained a grant to the Muscle Shoals region where, it will be recalled, Blount previously had been involved in a land speculation. Possibly because of this competition to his own schemes, but also because an attempt to found a settlement there would interfere with his negotiations with the Cherokee, the Governor used his influence against the undertaking. Nevertheless, in March, 1791, Cox led an expedition of about thirty-one men, including three citizens of the Territory, to the Shoals in an effort to make a settlement, but it was broken up by the Indians. Meanwhile, the South Carolina Yazoo Company was planning a settlement near the site of Vicksburg, Mississippi. This company employed as field agent a strange character named Dr. James O'Fallon, who came to the Southwest Ter-

* The other three were Long Island, Lookout Mountain, and Crow Town. But they also occupied Willstown in eastern Alabama, Doublehead's Town at the Muscle Shoals, and Coldwater (destroyed by Robertson in 1787) below the Shoals. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 175, 263, 319, frontispiece map.

ritory in 1790 and again in 1791. He claimed to have recruited John Sevier and James Robertson as sub-agents in Washington and Mero districts, respectively. Their plans did not materialize, however, because Washington issued proclamations against them and the Spaniards built a fort at the site of Vicksburg.¹⁴

As a result of the combined efforts of Blount, James Robertson, and Joseph Martin, and apparently with some aid from McGillivray, the Cherokee were induced to assemble at White's Fort late in June, 1791. Included among the 1,200 Indians were representatives of the Lower Cherokee, led by Chiefs John Watts and Bloody Fellow. The proceedings were opened with pomp and ceremony, with James ("Trooper") Armstrong acting as master of ceremonies and introducing the chiefs to the seated governor. The Indians pretended that they understood that the negotiations would deal only with procedural difficulties growing out of the Hopewell Treaty and were shocked by the demand for land cessions. Blount's efforts to include a cession of the Muscle Shoals area* were a complete failure, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he was able to obtain title to most of the land already occupied by white people. The new boundary according to this Treaty of the Holston,** signed July 2, 1791, was supposed to leave unchanged the Hopewell line so far as Middle Tennessee was concerned—following the Duck River, the ridge dividing the Duck from the Cumberland, and a "N. E. line" to the Cumberland River forty miles above Nashville. But the description was written in reverse—from east to west—and when actually surveyed in 1797 it was possible to take advantage of a technicality and have the line reach the Cumberland 175 or 200 miles above Nashville, thus taking care of the expansion of settlement in the meantime. The cession in East Tennessee was bounded on the west by the Clinch River and on the south by a straight line from the North Carolina boundary to the Clinch which would cross "the Holston" (the present Tennessee) at the ridge dividing the waters of the Little River from those of the Little Tennessee.*** As eventually surveyed in 1797 this line ran from near the mouth of the Clinch (at Kingston) to the slope of Blanket Mountain in the Great Smokies, passing a few miles south of Maryville. The line was extended to the North Carolina boundary at "Meig's Post" in 1802.

Other provisions of the treaty placed the Cherokee and their trade under the protection of the United States, provided for the exchange of prisoners,

* Blount's original proposal of a boundary which would include the Shoals met with the opposition of Secretary Knox; but he was later instructed by Knox to prepare for the establishment of a trading post near the Shoals, apparently as a part of his program of civilizing the Indians. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 50-52; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 240-42.

** At that time the name Holston was applied to what later (in the 1880's) became the Tennessee, between the mouth of the French Broad and the mouth of the Little Tennessee. See Chapter I.

*** At that time the Little Tennessee was called the Tennessee.

for free navigation of the Tennessee River by the whites, and the use of a road connecting the Washington and Mero districts. There were also provisions regarding punishment of white and Indian offenders, but any white settler on the Indian lands was left to the mercy of the savages. Finally, there was an important provision designed to advance the civilization of the Cherokee from "Herdsmen to cultivators." They were to be supplied "gratuitously" with "useful implements of husbandry" and with white instructors in their use.¹⁵

Indian Warfare—The treaties with the Creeks and the Cherokee of 1790 and 1791 did not result in the expected peace in the Southwest. There were several factors which contributed to the revival of Indian warfare. One of the most important was the crushing defeat of the army of Governor Arthur St. Clair of the Northwest Territory by the Northern Indians in November, 1791. This second annihilation of American troops (following the earlier disaster to General Josiah Harmar's expedition in the fall of 1790)* brought the prestige of the whites to a low ebb and sent delegations of Northern Indians to the Southern tribes to encourage them to join in a general effort to recover lost lands. It also ruined the hopes of Governor Blount that federal troops would be sent into the Southwest Territory. Defense was left to local militia and the Governor was instructed not to use them for any offensive operations. Soon after McGillivray's return from New York, William Augustus Bowles reappeared on the scene and so disrupted the Creek Indians that it became impossible to execute the Treaty of 1790. An associate, George Welbank, who had come down from British Canada, went to the Lower Cherokee towns and became a disruptive influence there. The arrival on December 30, 1791, of a new Spanish governor, Hector, Baron de Carondelet, to succeed Miró at New Orleans resulted in the adoption of a more aggressive Spanish policy. Carondelet immediately revitalized the coalition under Spanish protection of the Creek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw Indians, and extended it to include the Cherokee, using John McDonald,** an agent of Pantón's, to aid in achieving this aim. According to Professor A. P. Whitaker, "if Carondelet had had his way, he would have precipitated a general Indian war in order to compel the United States to relinquish the territory ceded by the Cherokee in the treaty of Holston."¹⁶

The Cherokee were greatly dissatisfied with the Holston treaty, and in January, 1792, a delegation appeared at the national capital to protest. Secretary Knox raised the annuity to \$1,500 and showered the Indians with presents, which Blount distributed at a meeting at Coyatee after their return. At the same

* Some Tennesseans participated in both the Harmar and St. Clair expeditions, but recruiting was very difficult for the latter. Masterson, *William Blount*, 201; Williams, *Phases of Southwest Territory History*, 21-25.

** He became the grandfather of John Ross. Spain also outbid the United States for McGillivray's allegiance, thus rendering illusory the hopes engendered by the Treaty of New York.

time he detailed the Indian atrocities which had occurred since the Holston treaty, including fifty whites killed, others taken as prisoners, and many horses stolen. Although more raids soon occurred, including a very serious one against Ziegler's Station in Sumner County, Blount was deceived by the friendly attitude of the Indians into believing that the Cherokee, including the five lower towns, were now friendly to the United States; and he so reported to Knox. The Secretary meanwhile was gaining the impression from the protest of the Cherokee delegation and from reports of anti-Blount agents that the Indians had valid grievances. He was even impressed by the demand made by the Chickamauga chief, Little Turkey, at the Cherokee general council at Ustanali in June that the Cumberland Valley should be evacuated by the whites because it was the common hunting grounds of the Creeks, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw. He wrote President Washington on July 28 that he had "some doubts" that this part of the Holston line "was agreeable to the opinion of the Cherokees generally" and he believed some arrangement would have to be made on that subject. Also, he wrote, "It would seem the Creeks consider the Cumberland settlers as intruders on the joint lands of the four Nations, and therefore they have the right to steal horses and in case of opposition to kill." Instead of bringing this matter to Blount's attention,* however, he merely urged the Governor to do his utmost to prevent a general war in the South, and to that end, he said, "Every just pretense of grievances on the part of the Indians, if any such exist, must be removed . . ."¹⁷

The hopes for peace were destroyed by Spanish influence. Immediately after the Coyatee conference, John Watts, who after Dragging Canoe's death in March, 1792, had succeeded him as war chief of the Chickamauga, was invited to Pensacola by William Panton. There he was assured that the Spaniards would supply the Cherokee with unlimited quantities of ammunition and help them recover their lands. He urged them to strike while the United States was weak and while the Cherokee could count on generous help from the Creeks. At a meeting at Willstown, Watts easily obtained a decision in favor of war; and on September 30 about six hundred Cherokee, Creek, and Shawnee warriors assembled for an attack on the Holston Valley. Learning that the whites had been warned, Watts shifted the attack to Buchanan's Station, four miles from Nashville, but it was successfully repulsed by Robertson's militia. Blount attempted to use this attack as a lever to induce the federal government to adopt a war policy, but without success. Only Congress could declare war and it would not meet until March; therefore, Secretary Knox ordered, all military operations must be purely defensive.¹⁸

* Blount, however, on January 14, 1793, did have an opportunity to present an effective rebuttal against those arguments. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 226-34. But Knox, it seems, was inclined to question Blount's objectivity because of his notorious involvement in land speculation.

Fortunately, the Indians remained relatively quiet for some time, possibly because of the failure of the Buchanan's Station raid, in which Watts had been seriously wounded. Also, Bloody Fellow and several other Cherokee leaders attended a conference of the chiefs of the Southern Indians which Carondelet had called at New Orleans and received a talk from the Spanish governor:

Your nation will try to Suspend all hostilities against the United States, remaining in Your lands on the defensive, while the Great King treats of peace between you and the Americans Your neighbors, and obtains from them the lands you need for Your Hunting, with a demarkation [*sic*] of Boundaries that will leave no more room for disputes.

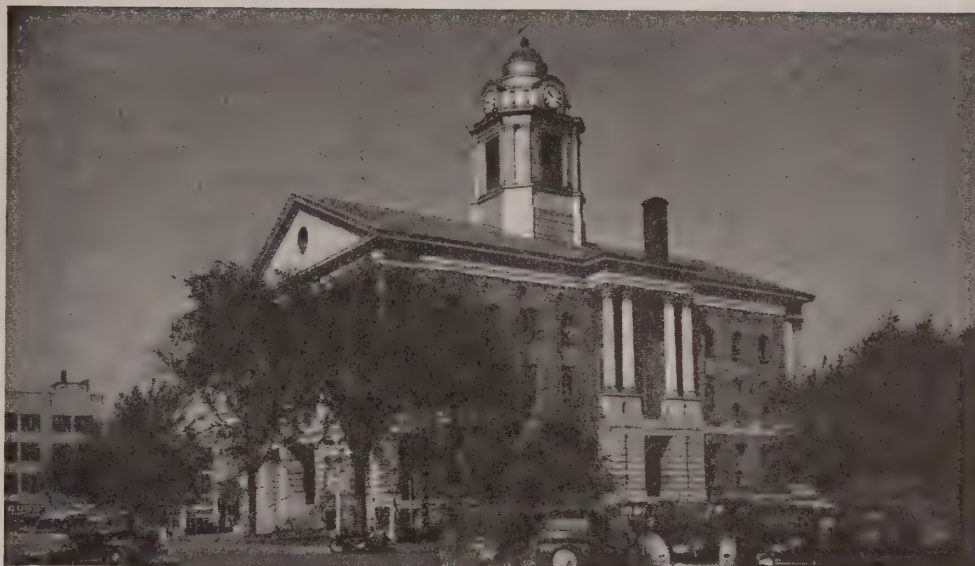
In a letter to Conde de Aranda, the Spanish prime minister, November 28, 1792, Carondelet explained his purpose:

. . . I went on leading them [the Cherokee] to the point that I had planned of uniting all those nations [including also the Creek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw] in union with those of the North against the United States in case His Majesty so decides, or to obtain for the King the mediation between them and the Americans, who will fear the displeasure of Spain . . . and will grant the Indians some advantageous conditions

He continued, however, that since the Cherokee because of encroachments on their hunting grounds had been obliged to renew their war with the Americans, it would be necessary to support them” Therefore, in addition to confirming the defensive alliance, he planned “underhandedly [to] Supply the Cherokees and Creeks with Sufficient arms and munitions to maintain themselves”¹⁹

The Cherokee reply, written for them by McDonald, reveals their exaggerated expectations. In response to the Spaniard's request for information regarding their boundary claims, they stated that since the Americans “through fraudulent methods” had “usurped the lands of the Indians,” they unanimously insisted that the “boundaries laid down in the treaty with the British Nation” be restored. If that should not be possible, they demanded “that the Cumberland settlement be removed in any event; outside of this there is nothing that will satisfy the Cherokees and the Creeks.”²⁰

Carondelet made similar assurances to the Creeks that Spain would help them recover their lands. McGillivray died on February 17, 1793, but the Spanish influence was continued through the medium of Pedro Olivier, Pantón's agent, and some use was made of McGillivray's brother-in-law, Luis le Clerc Milford (or Milfort), who temporarily succeeded him. On April 9 Milford wrote to Carondelet that he had told the general council of the nation what the Governor had told him to say: that they were “not to have any dispute with the



Shelbyville—Bedford County Court House

Americans," but to remain on guard and "not agree to mark any boundaries"; that the United States had sent two emissaries to Spain and that

the Great King will make an effort to have their land returned to them or at least a part of it, and that if the Americans do not want to define the boundary your father the Great King would make war on them with troops and vessels and oblige them to obey him, and that you are to be ready to fight here or to receive news of a peace.²¹

Under the circumstances, Governor Blount's task of maintaining peace with the Indians was an extremely difficult one. Although the Spaniards could claim that they urged the Indians to remain peaceful, their promises of diplomatic help and their supplying of ammunition to the savages actually engendered hostilities. The outbreak of war between the Chickasaw and the Creeks interfered with the Spanish-Indian alliance, and Hanging Maw was able to keep the Upper Cherokee relatively quiet; but the raids of the Chickamauga and the Creeks became so serious and widespread during the spring and summer of 1793 that the settlers on the frontiers throughout the whole Territory were forced to crowd within the walls of the various stations. Opposition to the Governor became increasingly evident, and he and the brigadier generals had great difficulty in enforcing the federal order against offensive operations. Frequently the fury of the settlers expressed itself against any red men who came within reach, and there were several ambushes of friendly Indians. The most serious outrage of that nature occurred in June, soon after Blount had left

Knoxville to go to Philadelphia to urge the government to adopt a war policy. Captain Hugh Beard and a group of militiamen slaughtered in cold blood the family of Hanging Maw and thus brought on a general war with the Cherokee.²²

In Philadelphia Blount with the aid of General Andrew Pickens had almost succeeded in inducing Secretary Knox and President Washington to authorize offensive operations against the Creeks in support of the Chickasaw when two developments occurred to prevent it. One was the breakdown of peace negotiations at Detroit with the Northern Indians, and the other was the arrival of the news of the Beard outrage. Knox immediately brought all talk about a war against the Southern Indians to an end and ordered Blount to return immediately to his post and endeavor to bring Beard and his companions to trial.^{*23}

Restoration of Peace—The gradual quieting of the Indians during the next two years was the result of a combination of factors. One of the most important was the adoption of offensive measures in disregard of federal orders. Late in September an "army" of six or seven hundred Cherokee and Creeks under John Watts approached Knoxville. Discord and confusion among the Indian leaders diverted** the attack to Cavet's Station, about eight miles distant, where a brutal massacre occurred. Secretary Smith ordered General Sevier with several hundred men to pursue the Indians into their own territory, and Sevier on this, his last Indian campaign, defeated the savages at the Battle of Etowah, near the present Rome, Georgia, and destroyed several Cherokee and Creek towns. Although the Indian raids continued, their number and ferocity were temporarily lessened. Even the Creeks expressed to the American agent in their country, James Seagrove, a desire for peace.²⁴

Complications soon arose resulting from the intrigues of Edmond Genêt, the French minister to the United States. France at that time was at war with Spain, and Genêt was instructed to induce the disgruntled Revolutionary War hero, George Rogers Clark, to organize an expedition of American frontiersmen and Indians for an attack against Spanish Louisiana. Clark attempted to comply, and one of his associates in the Illinois campaigns of the Revolution, Colonel John Montgomery,*** raised a force in the Mero District with the pur-

* Beard was brought to trial but was acquitted by a partisan jury. Masterson, *William Blount*, 252.

** According to Ramsey, *Annals*, 580, the Indians heard the firing of the cannon at dawn at the Knoxville fort (a daily procedure) and believed their approach had been discovered and were afraid to attack Knoxville, which was their real objective.

*** Montgomery had settled in what is now Montgomery County (then a part of Tennessee County) and had named the future county seat Clarksville in honor of his former leader. Andre Michaux, Genêt's agent, passed through the Southwest Territory later in 1793 and again in 1795, as did also General Victor Collot, agent of a later French minister, P. A. Adet, in 1796. Williams (ed.), *Early Travels*, 327-54.

pose of joining him. He built a small fort at the mouth of the Cumberland River, but his troops were dispersed by the Chickasaw Indians. The expedition failed to materialize, and Genêt was recalled by France at President Washington's request. It is interesting to note that Governor Blount, although he was later to intrigue in a similar way with the British, vigorously opposed the Genêt-Clark enterprise. He wrote to James Robertson on January 18, 1794, that he was "surprised and mortified" by Montgomery's activities.²⁵

Blount meanwhile continued his efforts to induce the federal government to adopt a war policy against the Creeks and Chickamauga, and called the elected house of representatives into session in February, 1794, in order to further his purpose. As expected, the representatives sent a memorial to Congress, detailing the two hundred murders by the Indians and the loss of more than \$100,000 worth of property since 1791. The national House of Representatives passed a bill providing for offensive operations, but it was emasculated by the Senate. The government was so heavily involved in General Anthony Wayne's campaign against the Northern Indians that it continued the policy of defense and conciliation in the South. Garrisoned posts were authorized at Southwest Point (Kingston), Fort Grainger (near Lenoir City) and Tellico Blockhouse (near the site of old Fort Loudoun), and delegations of the Cherokee and Chickasaw were brought to the national capital. Knox showered them with presents and increased the Cherokee annuity under the Holston treaty to \$5,000. Nevertheless, warriors of the five lower towns continued to join with the Creeks in raids against the Cumberland settlements; and when Knox still refused to permit offensive operations, Blount and Robertson worked out a plan to evade the federal orders. Major James Ore was sent with a company of sixty-nine men from Hamilton District to Mero for a scouting expedition. Blount gave explicit orders to Robertson that these troops and others being organized should be used only for defense. But Robertson, in accordance with a previously arranged understanding with the Governor, sent the troops, under Ore's command, on a surprise attack against the Chickamauga towns. He then resigned* his commission as brigadier general and assumed full responsibility. The so-called "Nickajack Expedition" was highly successful, dealing complete destruction upon two of the lower towns and materially lessening the warlike propensities of the Chickamauga.²⁶

With the Cherokee, including the lower towns, now more peacefully inclined toward the Americans, Blount at conferences at Tellico in December and January attempted to trick them into joining with the Chickasaw in a war against the Creeks. His efforts to get federal support for such a policy, however, were unsuccessful. The new secretary of war, Timothy Pickens, was even more inclined than Knox had been to question the relationship between Blount's

* Actually, Robertson's resignation was not accepted by Knox and he resumed his command.

Indian policy and his land speculations. Pickering's suspicions were increased by the reports of the agent of the War Department who had been sent into the Territory, David Henley, who became a vigorous critic of the Governor. Fortunately, the Creeks, without the support of the Chickamauga, were less inclined to raid the frontier; and the crushing of the Northern Indians by General Wayne at Fallen Timbers in the late summer of 1794 had had a quieting effect on the Southern Indians as well. Also, the Spanish policy became less aggressive. Carondelet devoted himself to trying to heal the breach between the Chickasaw and the Creeks and to keeping the Cherokee neutral. Because of the revival of the Yazoo land speculation, however, and because of Robertson's continuing efforts to establish a trading post on the Chickasaw Bluffs, he built Fort San Fernando at the site of Memphis in 1795. It was soon supplemented by one of Pantón's trading factories. But also in 1795 the Spanish government negotiated the Treaty of San Lorenzo by which she accepted the 31st parallel line as the southern boundary of the United States and granted the Americans free navigation of the Mississippi River. Although Spain delayed the evacuation of Fort San Fernando until the spring of 1797, she had long before that time abandoned her policy of maintaining her alliances with the Southern tribes. Denied Spanish support, those Indians were forced to make the best arrangements they could with the United States, and a more peaceful era dawned for the Southwest Territory as it was in the process of advancing from the territorial status to statehood.²⁷

CHAPTER X—NOTES

1. Williams, "Western Representation," 111-12; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 111; Williams, *State of Franklin*, 243 n.
2. The pertinent documents are printed in Clarence Edwin Carter (ed.), *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, IV, *The Territory South of the River Ohio: 1790-1796* (Washington, 1936), 3-19.
3. One example of a writer who was in error about the extent of the Southwest Territory is Frederick Austin Ogg, *The Reign of Andrew Jackson* (New Haven, 1921), 16; also, John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols., New York, 1911), I, 25.
4. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 19-33, 40.
5. Masterson, *William Blount*, 178 *et passim*.
6. *Ibid.*, 184-93. See also the same author's "William Blount and the Establishment of the Southwest Territory," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 23 (1951), 3-31; Samuel C. Williams, *Phases of Southwest Territory History* (Johnson City, 1940), 1-20.
7. *Knoxville Gazette*, December 17, 1791; Folmsbee and Deaderick, *The Founding of Knoxville*, 7-11; Mary U. Rothrock (ed.), *The French Broad-Holston Country: A History of Knox County, Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1946), 26-33; Masterson, *William Blount*, 177, 198, 207-08, 214, 220, 236; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 108-10, 448-54.

8. *Ibid.*, 81, 309-10; Masterson, *William Blount*, 199, 209-10, 221, 245, 256; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 256; Samuel C. Williams, "The Admission of Tennessee into the Union," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IV (December, 1945), 294.
9. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 163-66; Masterson, *William Blount*, 256-65; Ramsey, *Annals*, 621-41.
10. *Ibid.*, 641-45; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 167.
11. Masterson, *William Blount*, 186, 196; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 164-66.
12. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 175 *et passim*; Randolph G. Downes, "Indian Affairs in the Southwest Territory," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, 2nd Ser., III (January, 1937), 244.
13. Downes, "Cherokee-American Relations," 52-53; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 161-62.
14. Masterson, "William Blount and the Establishment of the Southwest Territory," 20-23; Driver, *John Sevier*, 73-77; Samuel C. Williams, "French and Other Intrigues in the Southwest Territory," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 13 (1941), 21-25; Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," *ibid.*, No. 25 (1953), 79, No. 26 (1954), 63; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 55-57.
15. Masterson, *William Blount*, 197-206; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 309-11; Ramsey, *Annals*, 555-56; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 153-55, 158-69. The text of the treaty is in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 60-66. For map see Charles C. Royce, "Indian Land Cessions in the United States," U. S. Bureau of Ethnology, *18th Annual Report* (Washington, 1899), Part II, Map 54 (Plate CLXI); also Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 44-45.
16. Masterson, *William Blount*, 214-22; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 244-48; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 89-95; Philip M. Hamer (ed.), "The British in Canada and the Southern Indians," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 2 (1930), 107-34; A. P. Whitaker, "Spain and the Cherokee Indians," *North Carolina Historical Review*, IV (July, 1927), 255-56.
17. Masterson, *William Blount*, 222-24; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 328-44; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 243-44, 248; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 160, 163-64.
18. Masterson, *William Blount*, 226-32; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 344-61; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 244-61; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 194-95.
19. Corbitt (ed.), "Spanish Papers," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 28 (1956), 137-38, 139-41.
20. Cherokees to Carondelet, April 5, 1793, Papeles de Cuba (Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain), *legajo* 208 (photostat in Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, translated by D. C. and Roberta Corbitt).
21. Milford to Carondelet, April 9, 1793, *ibid.*; Caughey, *McGillivray*, 11, 53.
22. Masterson, *William Blount*, 236-46.
23. *Ibid.*, 247-49; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 255-56.
24. *Ibid.*, 256-58; Masterson, *William Blount*, 252-54.
25. Williams, "French and Other Intrigues," 26-32.
26. Masterson, *William Blount*, 257-68; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 256-62; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 417-33, frontispiece map.
27. Masterson, *William Blount*, 268-77; Downes, "Indian Affairs," 264-67; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 109-14; Williams, *Beginnings of West Tennessee*, 49-60; Whitaker, *Spanish-American Frontier*, 201-22; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Fort Ferdinand on the Bluffs: Life on the Spanish-American Frontier, 1795-1797," *W.T.H.S. Papers*, No. XIII (1959), 38-54. For a recent account of the territorial period, see Caruso, *Appalachian Frontier*, 340-72.

CHAPTER XI

Admission into the Union

THE STATEHOOD MOVEMENT—Although Governor Blount had been largely responsible for the postponement for two years of representative government for the Southwest Territory, once this advance had been made he assumed the leadership of the movement in favor of taking the next step—to statehood. One reason for his belated provision for the election of a territorial assembly, as has been seen, was his hope that this legislative body and the delegate it would send to Congress would support his demand that the federal government adopt a more aggressive policy against the Southern Indians. Although such support was forthcoming, it proved to be inadequate, and Blount soon became convinced that only as a state in the Union with voting Senators and Representatives could the Tennessee country effectively protect its vital interests. Not only were the interests of the expansionist, anti-Indian inhabitants involved, but his own personal land speculative designs* would be promoted by a lessening of the Indians' resistance to encroachments on their lands. He was also aware of the restlessness of the popular John Sevier in a subordinate position. Statehood would make the governorship available for Sevier, and for himself the long-desired position in the United States Senate.^{1**}

The procedure by which a territory could become a state was not clearly defined; and there was no precedent to follow, since the only two states which had been added to the Original Thirteen, Vermont and Kentucky, had not been territories. The first question was whether the initiative should be taken by Congress or by the territorial government. Early in 1795 Blount was informed by Dr. James White, the territorial delegate, that "nothing will be done by Congress till we should come forward with a petition for the purpose." Blount therefore decided to call the territorial assembly into special session on June 29 to take the necessary actions. The assembly responded with a law providing for the taking of a census to determine if the free population of the Territory amounted to the necessary 60,000 and for the taking of a poll on the question of statehood. The census takers were instructed to ask each free adult male:

* With his own company moribund, Blount—and also Sevier—became identified in 1795 with the second effort of Zachariah Cox and his Tennessee Yazoo Company to establish a settlement at the Muscle Shoals. Masterson, *William Blount*, 280.

** He had been cruelly disappointed when he had not been elected one of North Carolina's first Senators.



Memphis—Harbor Project

(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

"Is it your wish if, on taking the enumeration, there should prove to be less than sixty thousand inhabitants, that the Territory shall be admitted as a State into the Federal Union with such less number or not." Apparently, it was taken for granted that an application for statehood should be made if the free population should prove to be 60,000 or more; the question asked was whether an effort should be made to gain admission even if the population should be less than the prescribed number.*²

The result of the referendum was a vote of 6,504 in favor of statehood, even if the population should be inadequate, and 2,562 against. Except for Greene County, where statehood won by a narrow margin, all the eastern counties voted overwhelmingly in favor of admission into the Union. In the two western counties where the vote was taken** the vote was equally overwhelmingly against. It is probable that the Middle Tennesseans were more concerned than the more wealthy easterners about the likelihood of increased taxation as a result of statehood. Also, they may have been afraid that they would be dominated by the more populous eastern section. If statehood should be delayed, they might become a separate state by themselves. The census revealed a total population of 77,262, of whom 10,613 were slaves; thus the total number of free inhabitants was 66,649, including 973 free Negroes.

The most populous of the eleven counties was Hawkins (13,331), with Knox (11,573) and Washington (10,105) ranking next. The total population of the eight eastern counties was 65,338, whereas in the three counties west of the Cumberland Mountains there were only 11,924.***³

The Constitutional Convention—Governor Blount issued a proclamation for the election on December 18 and 19 of five delegates from each county to a constitutional convention. Disregarding the property-holding restrictions on suffrage included in the Northwest Ordinance, he provided that any free male who had reached the age of twenty-one would be permitted to vote. The fifty-five delegates convened in Knoxville in the office of David Henley on January 11, 1796. James White of Knoxville made the arrangements for the meeting and was later reimbursed for his expenditures: \$10.00 for seats, \$2.62 "for 3½ yards of oil cloth," and \$22.50 for firewood, candles, stands, etc. When the convention adjourned, the delegates voted to reduce their own pay from \$2.50 to \$1.50 per day.****⁴

* The Northwest Ordinance did provide for the possible admission of a state with less than 60,000 people if "consistent with the general interest of the Confederacy."

** No vote was recorded for Sumner County.

*** Blount appended a note to his report: "The Yeas and Nays are unimportant as there proves to be upwards of 60,000 free inhabitants . . ."

**** This is an interesting contrast to the unsuccessful attempt of the delegates to the limited constitutional convention of 1959 to collect pay for three days during which they were not in session.

The personnel of the convention was outstanding and included several territorial officials: Governor Blount, who presided, Secretary Smith, Judges Anderson and McNairy, Dr. James White, the territorial delegate, General James Robertson, and several members of the legislature. Thus it is evident that the statehood movement was directed by territorial officials rather than by a dissatisfied opposition. The delegate who was to attain the greatest fame in later years was the future President, Andrew Jackson. But there were also future governors and congressmen such as William C. C. Claiborne, Archibald Roane, Joseph McMinn, John Rhea, and William Cocke. At the time, however, most of the delegates were frontiersmen; although born in the seaboard states, they had come largely from the uplands and had lived long enough in frontier Tennessee to acquire the frontiersman's point of view.⁵

The convention was opened not only with prayer but with a sermon by the Reverend Samuel Carrick. A committee of twenty-two, under the chairmanship of Daniel Smith, was created to submit a draft of a constitution. Contrary to tradition it was Smith rather than Andrew Jackson who proposed the name Tennessee for the new state. In fact, he had proposed it nearly three years before; he had written and published in 1793 a *Short Description of the Tennessee Government*, accompanied by a map of the region. A later edition, published in 1795, was widely copied and the name was already in general use.^{*6}

Although the Blount faction was usually in control of the convention proceedings, there was a rather formidable opposition group with which it was forced to contend. This group was led by two former Pennsylvanians, Joseph McMinn and Joseph Anderson, and the father-in-law of the latter, Alexander Outlaw. It advocated the establishment of a unicameral (one-house) legislature, such as the colony of Pennsylvania had for many years; and when it failed, it tried to limit the powers of the upper house, or senate. The opposition also took the initiative in proposing a declaration of rights, to which the Blount group did not object, except that it succeeded in deleting a declaration of the "right of soil" which it feared might handicap the land speculators. The Blount faction, which included Andrew Jackson, also succeeded in deleting from the qualifications of officeholders the requirement that they believe in the "divine authority of the old and new testaments." They were required to believe only in the "being of God" and a "future state of rewards and punishments." The delegates were apparently oblivious to the inconsistency of that clause with a provision of the bill of rights stating: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under this state."** Such inconsistencies no doubt

* The complication resulting from the existence of a county named Tennessee in the Cumberland Valley was removed by the first legislature, which divided that county into Montgomery and Robertson counties.

** This inconsistency is still characteristic of Tennessee's constitution today—Article I, Section 4; Article IX, Section 2.

arose from the fact that the framers of the constitution borrowed liberally from the provisions of several existing state constitutions. Contrary to tradition, it was not the fundamental law of North Carolina but that of Pennsylvania from which the largest percentage of Tennessee's first constitution was copied. This probably was due to the fact that there were about the same number of former Pennsylvanians as former North Carolinians in the convention. Also, the Pennsylvania instrument was more modern, efficient, and democratic than North Carolina's; and Tennessee, like other new Western states, entered the Union with a more liberal constitution than the one under which its people previously had been governed.⁷

The Constitution—The preamble of the constitution expressed the familiar doctrine that government originates as a result of a mutual compact:

We the people of the Territory of the United States, south of the River Ohio, having the right of admission into the general government as a member state thereof, . . . Do ordain and establish the following constitution . . . and do mutually agree with each other to form ourselves into a free and independent state

This language not only repeated the basic principle of previous compacts such as the Watauga and Cumberland associations and the state of Franklin, but also carried with it the implication that if Congress did not admit the new state, Tennessee would continue to function under its constitution as an independent commonwealth. The opposition leaders, Anderson and Outlaw, had actually introduced in the convention a motion to that effect.⁸

Legislative authority was vested in a "General Assembly" consisting of "a Senate and House of Representatives, both dependent on the people." Representation in both branches was to be proportional to taxable inhabitants. Elections were to be held on the first Thursday and Friday of August in odd-numbered years, and the legislature was to meet regularly on the third Monday of the succeeding September, but could be called into special session by the governor. No one was eligible to membership in the legislature who was not at least twenty-one years of age, a resident of the state for three years and of the county from which he was elected for one year, and the owner of at least two hundred acres of land. Also, "no minister of the gospel, or priest of any denomination whatever" was eligible to membership in either house.*

The powers of the legislature were extensive and unfettered by any gu-

* Article VIII, Section 1. This prohibition is in the present constitution—Article IX, Section 1. The reason given in both the original and the present constitution is that since ministers are "dedicated to God and the care of souls," they "ought not to be diverted from the great duties of their functions" The opposition group attempted to debar ministers from all public offices.

bernatorial veto. The only constitutional restraints were in regard to maximum salaries of certain officials, the creation of new counties, and the nature of the tax system. The tax clause appears to have been copied from the existing statute of North Carolina rather than from any constitutional provision, and was designed to protect the interests of the land speculators.⁹ It stated that "all lands . . . shall be taxed equal and uniform," and "no one hundred acres shall be taxed higher than another, except town lots, which shall not be taxed higher than two hundred acres each . . ." The general assembly also had the power of appointment of all officers, except as otherwise directed in the constitution, and the power of impeachment.

The supreme executive power was invested in a governor elected by the people for a two-year term but he was not permitted to serve more than three consecutive terms. He was required to be at least twenty-five years of age and the owner of five hundred acres of land. His powers, although not extensive, were greater than those of North Carolina's governor. He was commander in chief of the militia except when called into federal service; he could grant pardons and reprieves; but he had no veto power and could make appointments only to fill vacancies. His main function was to "take care that the laws shall be faithfully executed." No provision was made for a lieutenant governor; the speaker of the senate was to assume the gubernatorial powers in the event of death, resignation, or removal from office of the governor. The other executive offices provided for in the constitution were a treasurer or treasurers and a secretary of state, who were to be elected by the legislature.

The judicial branch of the government was to be comprised of "such superior and inferior courts of law and equity" as the legislature should create. The judges were to be elected by the general assembly and were to serve "during their good behavior"; that is, they could be removed only by impeachment. County government was to be in charge of justices of peace named by the legislature, who were authorized by statute (not by the constitution) to constitute a county court. This county court was given the power to appoint a sheriff, a coroner, a trustee, a sufficient number of constables, a register, and a ranger. Citizens subject to military duty were empowered to elect the field officers of the militia in each county and "captains, subalterns and non-commissioned officers" in the several districts. The brigadier and major generals were to be elected by the field officers of their respective brigades and divisions.

The provision in the constitution regarding the suffrage was so phrased that it has caused considerable confusion among historians:

Every freeman of the age of twenty-one years and upwards, possessing a freehold in the county wherein he may vote, and being an inhabitant of this state, and every freeman being an inhabitant of any one county in the state six months preceding the day of election, shall be entitled to

vote for members of the general assembly, for the county in which he shall reside.

Careless reading of this section has led many writers to conclude that only property owners—of a freehold—could vote under this constitution.¹⁰ Actually, any free man, twenty-one or more years of age, including Negroes, could vote in his own county if he had resided in that county for six months, whether he owned any property or not. The owner of a freehold was merely exempted from satisfying any specific residence qualification.* Thus it may be said that Tennessee's first constitution, for all practical purposes, provided for universal manhood suffrage.

The constitution included a number of miscellaneous provisions. All elected and appointed officials were required to take an oath to support the constitution and also an oath of office, and efforts were made to prevent corruption at the ballot box. Knoxville was to be the state capital until 1802. Laws and ordinances then in force should continue in use until altered or repealed. The constitution could not be amended except by the holding of another convention, which could be called by a two-thirds vote of the general assembly, subject to the approval of a majority of the total number of voters voting for representatives at the next general election. Not subject to amendment, however, was the "declaration of rights hereto annexed," which was "excepted out of the general powers of government," and was to remain forever "inviolable."

Like the bills of rights in the constitutions of the Revolutionary War period, Tennessee's declaration begins with the assertion of the right of revolution:

I. That all power is inherent in the people,** and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness; for the advancement of those ends, they have, at all times, an unalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform, or abolish the government in such manner as they may think proper.

Among the other rights guaranteed are religious freedom, trial by jury, security of persons, houses, and possessions, the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, and freedom of speech, press, and peaceful assembly. As an outgrowth of the difficulties which led to the Spanish intrigue,*** it was declared:

That an equal participation of the free navigation of the Mississippi, is

* The opposition group in the convention attempted unsuccessfully to grant the same exemption to militiamen or persons liable to military service. It is interesting to speculate whether the suffrage clause gave a land owner the right to vote in any county in which he owned a freehold.

** In disregard of this principle the constitution was declared to be in effect without first being submitted to a popular vote.

*** See Chapter IX.

one of the inherent rights of the citizens of this state; it cannot therefore, be conceded to any prince, potentate, power, person, or persons whatever.

The Admission Question in Congress—In 1796, when the prospective state of Alaska held an election of two "Senators" and a "Representative" to Congress, it was said that she was following the "Tennessee plan" in her effort to achieve statehood. Actually, Alaska did not follow that plan in its entirety, for her "territorial" assembly and appointed governor still continued to function. She did not put into operation a state government as Tennessee did in 1796. In that year, following the adjournment of the constitutional convention, government under the law creating the Southwest Territory came rapidly to an end. The territorial assembly was replaced by a state legislature, the members of which were elected in March. They convened for their first session near the end of that month, and on March 30 John Sevier, who had been elected along with the legislators, was inaugurated governor. The legislature proceeded to elect William Blount and William Cocke as the state's first two Senators and divided the state into two congressional districts from which members of the House of Representatives were to be chosen in August. The legislature also elected four presidential electors to participate in the election of 1796, and it created new counties and enacted such laws as were necessary for the functioning of the state government.¹¹

Meanwhile, the draft of the state constitution had been taken by Joseph McMinn to the national capital, and President Washington had submitted it to Congress on April 8. In his accompanying message the President stated that a territory had the right to frame a permanent constitution and gain admission as a state, provided its population were 60,000 and the constitution and government were "republican,"* as required by the Northwest Ordinance. It was the decision of this same President, however, not to accept a third term which was to throw a serious obstacle in the way of Tennessee's admission into the Union. Although this decision was not announced formally until the "Farewell Address" was delivered in September, it was generally known among political leaders early in the year 1796;¹² and for the first time two political parties became engaged in a contest for the presidency. The Federalists, especially those of New England, were anxious to win the nomination and the election for John Adams; it was generally expected that Thomas Jefferson would be the candidate of the Republicans.** The Federalists, knowing the popularity of Jefferson and his party in the West, naturally feared that if Tennessee should be admitted in time to participate in the election, she would give her electoral votes to Jef-

* Although the congressmen probably were not aware of it, Thomas Jefferson considered Tennessee's constitution "the least imperfect and most republican" of any adopted up to that time. Ramsey, *Annals*, 657.

** The ancestor of the present Democratic party.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Court Square

feron rather than to Adams. On June 2, the next day after the state had been admitted on the basis of a compromise reducing its electoral vote, Senators Blount and Cocke wrote to Governor Sevier that "Tennessee would have experienced no difficulty" in gaining admission, had it not been for the fear that it "would throw its weight in the Southern Scale against Mr. Adams . . ." ¹³

In the House of Representatives the Northern Federalists attempted to distract attention from this sectional nature of the opposition by having the argument against admission opened by a South Carolinian, William L. Smith, an

aristocratic member of their party. He was followed by Theodore Sedgwick of Massachusetts, Samuel Sitgreaves of Pennsylvania, and others. They argued that the initiative in the creation of a new state should have been taken by Congress rather than by the Territory; that the territorial census was unauthorized and also unreliable, since it was generally understood that not only inhabitants but also many persons merely passing through the Territory had been counted; and that the state constitution was drawn hastily and in some respects was in conflict with the Constitution of the United States. They also pointed out that the Ordinance of 1787 provided that the Northwest Territory should be divided into from three to five states and that it was illogical to assume that the whole Southwest Territory should become one state.* Only Congress was competent to decide; and if the Territory should be divided into more than one, each state would need a population of 60,000 to be eligible. Sitgreaves cleverly called attention to the evidence that the Cumberland counties were opposed to statehood and that this region was widely separated from the eastern portion of the Territory.¹⁴

The advocates of admission also were able to induce a Federalist from South Carolina, Robert G. Harper, to open their side of the debate, but he was later forced by party pressure into the opposing camp. The leading proponent** of admission was the prominent Virginia Republican, James Madison. He countered the opposing arguments by pointing out that the census provided for by the territorial government had in effect federal authority since the governor and the council had been appointed by the President. He believed the returns were accurate, but even if they were not, the error would be quickly corrected by the rapid immigration into that country. It was quite evident that the people of the Territory desired to be admitted into the Union and they were entitled to it as a matter of right. They were being held politically in a "degraded situation," being deprived of a right essential to free men—that of representation in Congress. "Laws to govern them were being made without their consent . . ."¹⁵

The Republicans had a majority in the House and were able to pass a bill providing for the immediate admission of Tennessee by a vote of 43 to 30. The partisan nature of the issue is indicated by the fact that of the forty-three affirmative votes only three were cast by members who were definitely affiliated with the Federalist party; only two of the negative votes were cast by Republicans. The division was also sectional. Only one representative who lived south of the Potomac River, William L. Smith, voted against the admission of Ten-

* Actually, the North Carolina cession law had stated that the region ceded should be made into "one or more" states. See Chapter X.

** Another advocate of admission, Robert Rutherford of Virginia, called attention to the military service of the Tennesseans in the Revolutionary War. S. C. Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 307.

nessee, whereas seventeen of twenty New England votes were against admission.*¹⁶

The Federalists, however, had a majority in the Senate, and they almost succeeded in postponing the admission of Tennessee until after the election. The committee to which the question was referred was under the chairmanship of the prominent New York Federalist, Rufus King. Its majority report was a concise restatement of the arguments against admission which had been presented in the House. The committee reluctantly agreed, however, that the Territory might be admitted as one state, but insisted that this should not be done until after a more satisfactory census had been taken under the authority of Congress. A minority report in favor of immediate admission in order to avoid the anarchy which would result from the overthrowing of the state government already established was rejected by the Senate, and the majority report was then adopted by a vote of 14 to 11. This vote was strictly along party lines except that Humphrey Marshall, a Federalist from Kentucky, voted against adoption. Two Northerners voted against and three Southerners in favor of the majority report. Subsequently, a bill in accordance with this report was passed, 15 to 8, with two admissionists voting in favor, apparently in the belief that there was no hope for anything better. The House of Representatives, however, refused to accept the Senate bill; but it proposed as a compromise the immediate admission of Tennessee—in time to participate in the election—but with the right to have only one Representative in the House, instead of the two to which its population presumably entitled it, until the next federal census should be taken in 1800. This would reduce the number of Tennessee's electoral votes from four to three. The Senate at first refused to accept the compromise, and a conference committee was created to reconcile the differences between the Senate and House bills. Aaron Burr, who was to be Jefferson's running mate in the presidential election, was one of the two Senators on the committee, and he was largely instrumental in inducing the committee and subsequently the Senate to accept the House compromise. The bill admitting Tennessee into the Union was passed on May 31 and was signed by President Washington on June 1, the last day of this session of Congress.¹⁷

While the debates were in progress, William Cocke and William Blount, senators-elect from Tennessee, appeared and claimed their seats. The Senate refused to seat them but gave them permission to view the proceedings as spectators. Even after the admission bill was passed, the Senate refused to permit them to take their seats, insisting that they be elected again by the state legis-

* New York voted 4 to 3 and New Jersey 3 to 0 against admission. Maryland was evenly divided, Delaware absent, and Pennsylvania voted 6 to 2 in favor. This last mentioned vote may have been influenced by the fact that former Pennsylvanians had played an important part in the settlement of Tennessee and in the drafting of its constitution.

lature. Their presence in Philadelphia, however, enabled them to serve effectively as lobbyists. Blount, it seems, had several conversations with Burr and was able to convince him of the serious dangers involved in failing to admit Tennessee immediately into the Union. Also influential in bringing about the Senate's acceptance of the compromise was the creation of two vacancies by the resignation of two Federalist leaders of the anti-admission faction, Rufus King and Oliver Wolcott. Another Northern Federalist, George Cabot, was absent when the crucial votes were taken, and Samuel Livermore of Connecticut shifted to the admission side.¹⁸

The action of Congress necessitated the calling of the Tennessee legislature into special session to reelect the Senators and to provide for the election of one Representative instead of two and three presidential electors instead of four. This special session convened on July 30, and Blount and Cocke were again elected to the Senate. Andrew Jackson was elected by the people in August to be Tennessee's first Representative. In December the three electors, who were chosen by a very cumbersome system provided for by the special session, met and cast their votes for Jefferson and Burr. Thus, the Federalists' fears were justified, but in the national election John Adams was able to defeat Jefferson for the presidency by a margin of three electoral votes. Had Tennessee not been admitted in time to participate, his margin would have been somewhat safer. Even though the Federalists had not been successful in their efforts to postpone the admission of Tennessee, the obviously partisan nature of their opposition rendered that party practically nonexistent in the state.¹⁹

CHAPTER XI.—NOTES

1. Masterson, *William Blount*, 256, 282, *et passim*; Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 297-98.
2. *Ibid.*, 292, 295-96.
3. *Ibid.*, 297; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 170. The returns, and also the census, are printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, IV, 404-05.
4. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 170, 171.
5. *Ibid.*, 171; Masterson, *William Blount*, 287-88; John D. Barnhart, "The Tennessee Constitution of 1796: A Product of the Old West," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (November, 1943), 539-40.
6. Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 302-03. For the 1795 map, see *supra*, 3.
7. Barnhart, "Tennessee Constitution," 539-48. Barnhart lists eight delegates as former residents of Pennsylvania and seven of North Carolina. He neglects to include James Robertson, however, as a former resident of North Carolina as well as of his native state, Virginia. Including Robertson, there were sixteen former Virginians in the convention.
8. *Ibid.*, 544-45; Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 299. The text of the constitution is most conveniently available in the Appendix of Robert H. White (ed.), *Messages of the Governors of Tennessee* (5 vols. to date, Nashville, 1952—), I, 663-73.

9. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 136.
10. Among the many works containing this error are several atlases, e.g., Clifford and Elizabeth H. Lord, *Historical Atlas of the United States* (New York, 1944), 54; Albert B. Hart, David M. Matteson, and Herbert E. Bolton, *American History Atlas* (Chicago, 1942), 38.
11. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 178; Ramsey, *Annals*, 657-69. In addition to creating the new counties of Robertson and Montgomery, already mentioned, the first legislature also formed Carter and Grainger counties.
12. Edward Stanwood, *History of the Presidency* (Boston and New York, 1898), 43-44.
13. Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 312-13.
14. Good discussions of the congressional debate are in *ibid.*, 304-14, and Charlotte Williams, "Congressional Action on the Admission of Tennessee into the Union," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, II (December, 1943), 291-315. Reprinted in *Tennessee: Old and New*, I, 27-50.
15. *Ibid.*, 306.
16. *Ibid.*, 307-08.
17. *Ibid.*, 308-15; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 181-82; S. C. Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 311-13.
18. *Ibid.*, 310-14; Masterson, *William Blount*, 295-96.
19. S. C. Williams, "Admission of Tennessee," 315-17; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 182, 193.

CHAPTER XII

Social and Economic Developments

PIONEER LIFE—When Tennessee entered the Union it was still a frontier state, only about twenty-eight years having elapsed since the first settlements had been made in the Holston Valley. The Cumberland settlements had been in existence only sixteen years. The population of the state in 1800 was 105,602, of whom 13,893 were colored (mostly Negro slaves). According to an estimate which was made on the basis of the 1790 census, the white population was predominantly English—about 83 per cent. The proportion of Scotch (Scotch-Irish), which frequently has been overestimated, was 11.2 per cent. About 3 per cent were German or Dutch, 2.3 per cent Irish, and 0.3 per cent French.¹ This estimate, however, considerably underestimates the number of non-English people, for it was based on the proportions existing in North Carolina at the time (since the individual census returns for the Tennessee country were lost), and the proportion of non-English residents in the back country undoubtedly was much greater than along the Carolina seaboard.*

In what is now East Tennessee the area of settlement extended from the Virginia line to the Little Tennessee River and as far west as the Clinch. Most of the small number of settlers on the other side of the Cumberland Mountains in what was then known as West Tennessee (ultimately to be called Middle Tennessee) were scattered along the Cumberland River from approximately the site of the present Carthage to Clarksville, at the mouth of the Red River. Permanent white settlement of what is now West Tennessee was still twenty-five years in the future.²

Normally, the Southern frontier was settled in two waves, the transient hunters and herdsmen being followed by the agriculturalists who came to possess the land. In Tennessee the two waves came very close together, and the farmers remained, to a considerable degree, herdsmen throughout the ante bellum period. Cattle, sheep, and hogs were permitted to graze at will on the "range," particularly in the hilly areas, and were regularly driven in large

* For example, Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 3 n., believes the proportion of Scotch-Irish in Tennessee at the time of the Revolution was about 25 per cent.

droves along the trails to the eastern markets.^{3*} This was true because many landowners cultivated only a relatively small part of their holdings. Clearing the land was a very difficult task, accomplished by girdling the trees (chopping a ring around them), and after they were dead, cutting them down, burning them, and digging out the roots. In pioneer days land frequently could be rented merely for the clearing of it.

The typical frontier home was a log cabin. Those built by the first settlers and later by poor people usually had only one room, with a loft above in which the boys of the family slept. The floors were of earth or of puncheons, logs split in two with the flat side up. The roofs were usually made of long, white-oak clapboards, held in place by ridgepoles and by wooden pegs, since in the early days nails were lacking. Windows, as well as the doors, were sawed out after the walls were finished, and in the absence of glass were covered by glazed paper and wooden shutters. On one side of the room was a huge fireplace, for cooking as well as for heat.

The furnishings were primitive. Early bed frames were slabs of wood supported at one end by wooden pegs driven into the wall. Mattresses were bed ticks filled with straw or pine needles and covered with animal skins. A large clapboard set on wooden legs served as a table, and chairs were short sections sawed from the trunk of a tree. Spoons were whittled out of horn or of wood, and hunting knives served also for table use. Plates were of pewter or wood. The humble gourd served many purposes. The trusty rifles and powder horns rested on wooden pegs inserted in the walls, and from similar pegs or the antlers of a deer the clothing of the family was suspended.

The dress of the early pioneers was locally supplied and similar to that worn by Indians. The hunting shirt generally was of dressed deerskin; it fitted loosely and reached half way down the thighs and was fringed at the bottom. Trousers were of similar material, and moccasins of dressed buckskin or buffalo hide. Leggings, wide strips of deerskin wound around the ankles, were worn as protection against briars and snakes. The dresses of the pioneer women were of linsey or osnaburg, a course linen, and were dyed in different colors to produce variety. Jewels or other objects of adornment usually were lacking.

The food of the pioneer family was simple. Corn was the "staff of life." It was made into "johnny cakes" or cooked as hominy or mush. Some, of course,

* Wilma Dykeman in *The French Broad*, Chap. 9, "The Great Drives," has an interesting account of the use of the French Broad route from East Tennessee to the Carolinas even as late as the 1880's. In the earlier days the route northeastward through Virginia was most used.

Because the livestock of several individuals grazed on the same range, the registration in county courthouses of stock marks and brands were necessary. Mrs. Charles F. Wayland, "An Old Book of Stock Marks and Brands of Knox County, Tennessee [1792-1874]," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 22 (1950), 148-57.



(Courtesy Newport "Plain Talk and Tribune")

Newport—City Park

was distilled into spirituous liquor. Wild animals supplied most of the meat, but as herds and flocks increased domestic animals also were used. Meat was preserved by salting, when salt was available, or jerking, that is, by stringing it over strips of wood and drying it over a slow fire. Vegetables, fruits, and nuts, and also maple sugar and honey, augmented the diet.⁴

By the end of the eighteenth century the standard of living had greatly improved, even in the isolated Cumberland settlements. The houses of the more prosperous inhabitants were larger and better furnished. Even those built of logs were better constructed, of hewn logs, and usually two stories in size. In the towns there were some frame houses and others built of brick or stone. Shingled roofs were customary, some glass windows were to be seen, and puncheon floors had been replaced with planks. Furniture and furnishings had been brought in from the East. "Swan Pond," the home of Francis A. Ramsey (the father of the historian, James G. M.), near Knoxville, built in 1797, is an example

of the finer homes of the period. Designed in Gothic style by the London-trained architect, Thomas Hope, it was constructed of pink marble and fieldstone, with two high stories, a deep basement and an attic, long, narrow windows, and hand-carved cornices, painted to resemble stone.* "Cragfont," the home of General James Winchester, near Gallatin, recently purchased by the state, is another stone house built in the 1790's. Stone masons came from Baltimore, Maryland, to help construct it.⁵

Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Commerce—In addition to the grazing of livestock, already mentioned, agriculture was chiefly devoted to the growing of grain, especially corn, the leading crop in both areas of settlement; but some wheat, rye, oats, and barley also were grown. Each home usually had its vegetable garden and its cotton, flax, and tobacco patches. At first the latter articles were produced for home consumption, but by 1799 it had become necessary for the legislature to regulate the export of tobacco, requiring that it be packed in a prescribed manner and inspected to see that no trash was included. Inspection places were established in four counties in Middle Tennessee and in Greene County in the eastern division. Cotton also became an important article for export in Middle Tennessee after Whitney's cotton gin came into use in this region about 1800.

Agricultural methods were quite primitive. Plows were commonly made of wood, except for an iron point, called a "bull tongue," which was bolted on. Mouldboards and iron shares, however, were beginning to come into use by the eighteenth century. Hoes and harrows also were used. Grain was cut with a reap hook or cradle and was separated from the straw by the use of a flail or the feet of horses. In 1795 the average yield of corn per acre was sixty bushels, but on the best land seventy bushels could be raised. The price of corn in Knoxville at that time was from 25 to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ cents per bushel, whereas in Nashville it sold for only 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ cents, the price differential probably being due to the greater isolation of Nashville. Wheat sold at both places for 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ cents per bushel, rye for 41 $\frac{1}{3}$, oats for 33, and potatoes for 33 $\frac{1}{3}$. Whiskey sold for 50 cents a gallon in Knoxville and 75 cents to \$1.00 in Nashville. The price of pork in Knoxville was \$3.33 per hundred pounds and in Nashville \$3.00. Butter and cheese sold at both places for 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ cents per pound. Counterbalancing somewhat the lower prices received for produce in the Nashville Basin was the greater fertility of the land in that area than East Tennessee. Consequently, the plantation system of agriculture had an early beginning in Middle Tennessee, with a greater use of slave labor. As early as 1795 more than 20 per cent of the

* The Blount Mansion (1792) in Knoxville, a frame house built by the territorial governor, restored and operated by the Governor William Blount Mansion Association, and supplied with period furnishings, is the leading tourist attraction in the city and a valuable aid in the teaching of pioneer history.

population of that region were Negro slaves, as compared with 12½ per cent in the eastern division.*⁶

The isolation of the Tennessee settlements contributed to the development of manufacturing. Lacking the transportation facilities by which manufactured goods could be brought in from outside the region, the settlers were forced to make things for themselves. Much of this activity took place in the homes, with the women busily occupied at the spinning wheel and hand loom in the making of clothing and also engaged in the making of soap, candles, and many other necessities. Meanwhile, as indicated above, the men were forced to make their own farm implements and furniture, as well as building, with the aid of neighbors, their own houses. The first manufacturing establishments outside the homes, for the use of the whole community, were grist mills for the grinding of grain. The availability of water power led to the establishment of such mills in nearly every community. Tanneries and blacksmith shops also appeared very early.

The development of the iron industry was especially significant. David Ross established what appears to have been the first iron works in the Tennessee country late in 1789 or early in 1790 on the Hawkins County side of the North Fork of the Holston, opposite the site of Kingsport. His furnace, however, was located on Reedy Creek in Sullivan County, just west of the Long Island. Subsequently, one of his employees, Colonel James King, started the foundry in which Governor William Blount of the Southwest Territory became financially interested in 1795, near Blountville in Sullivan County.** According to tradition, Mrs. Blount christened the main furnace "Barbara" in honor of the Governor's mother. It was at this place that Blount wrote his fateful letter to James Carey in 1797. Prior to 1792 Nicholas Tate Perkins had established an iron works on Mossy Creek near the site of Jefferson City. In 1795 Walter King, soon after his marriage to a daughter of John Sevier, started a foundry at Pactolus in Sullivan County (about six miles above Kingsport), in which both Sevier and his son, John, Jr., were partners. The first iron foundry in Middle Tennessee was started by James Robertson in Dickson County about 1793. So active and important had the iron industry become by 1794 that the territorial council passed

* In 1800 the population of Knoxville was 387, of whom 146 were slaves; of Nashville, 345, of whom 151 were slaves. But Davidson County had 2,936 slaves out of a total population of 9,618, whereas Knox County had only 1,122 slaves out of a total population of 11,981. "Schedule of the whole number of Persons in the District of Tennessee" (accompanying President's Message of December 22, 1801). Reprinted in E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 26 (1954), opposite p. 106.

** When it was started is uncertain. Oliver Taylor's date (*Historic Sullivan*, 153) of 1784, followed by many writers, is obviously erroneous. Blount wrote his brother John Gray, on March 28, 1795, "I *probably* not *certainly* with Col. King shall own a Blumary [bloomery] equal to any in the world . . . near Blount-Ville where 1000 ct of the best quality of Iron can be made by the Works in their present State per day." He had in mind building a slitting mill and nail factory. Alice Barnwell Keith (ed.), *The John Gray Blount Papers*, II (Raleigh, 1959), 520-22.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Front Street, Cotton Center

a resolution to exempt from militia duty fourteen artisans who worked at furnaces and not more than four others who worked at bloomeries.* By 1807 the state legislature had passed a law to encourage the iron industry.⁷

Cotton manufacturing also had an early beginning in Tennessee. Although it existed less than two years, the first cotton factory in the South and probably

* Bloomeries were small forges at which rough wrought iron could be produced. Cast iron came from the larger furnaces, and there were some refinery forges at which the pigs of cast iron could be hammered into a finer grade of wrought iron, and a few crude rolling mills to produce flat strips necessary for the making of cut nails. Water power was necessary for the heavy machinery, and charcoal was the fuel for the furnaces and forges. Paul M. Fink, "The Bumpass Cove Mines and Embreeville," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 48-64. These mines, near Jonesboro, which came into the possession of Elihu and Elijah Embree about 1808, had earlier been the source of lead, including according to tradition the bullets used at King's Mountain. In the 20th century they became important for zinc and manganese. In the interim they were a leading source of iron in East Tennessee.

the third in the nation was established in 1791 in the vicinity of Nashville at a place called Manchester,* after the famous cotton manufacturing city in England. Its founder was John Hague, an Englishman who had succeeded in smuggling out of England into Pennsylvania parts and designs of cotton manufacturing machinery and was rewarded with a grant of 100 pounds by the legislature of that state in 1788. Learning of the cultivation of cotton in the Cumberland Valley, he determined to establish a factory at Nashville, and he advertised for weavers in the December 17, 1791, issue of the *Knoxville Gazette*. Because of Indian raids, however, the establishment was abandoned, and Hague moved to Virginia in 1793. Following the arrival of the cotton gin, George Poyzer established a small cotton factory in Nashville in 1802, and soon thereafter other factories were located in Murfreesboro and in what is now Williamson County.⁸

Although the Tennesseans settled in river valleys, for some years they made little use of the rivers for commerce. This was true because of the navigation hazards and the Spanish policy, already described, of denying to the Americans free use of the Mississippi from 1783 to 1795. Instead, as settlement progressed and roads developed, wagon trains came in from the Eastern cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Richmond with goods to stock the stores which sprang up in each little town.⁹ Nelson and Company of Hawkins Court House (Rogersville), for example, advertised in the *Knoxville Gazette*, January 14, 1792:

Clothes, superfine and second and coarse; plain and striped coatings; spotted swan skin; velvets, all colors; buff denim; green plush; poplins; calicoes; muslins; cambricks; lawn and muslin handkerchiefs; men's and women's stockings, cotton and silk; Irish linen; blankets; bed ticks; hats, men's and women's.

Powder, lead and flints; queensware; pewter; playing cards; copperas; madder; brimstone; allspice; pepper and ginger; coffee and chocolate; Bohea and Hyson tea. Bibles and Testaments; tinware of all kinds; knives, pen, pocket and cutting; scissors; needles, thimbles; shoe and knee buckles; stirrup irons, bridle bits; and articles too numerous to mention.

These goods usually were exchanged for produce of the country, which was sent back east. One new storekeeper advertised on December 31, 1791, that

The highest price will be allowed for bear, deer, otter, wild cat, muskrat, mink, fox, and raccoon skins, and for all kinds of fur whatever. Beeswax, linsey and seven hundred linen wanted immediately and a quantity of rye, corn and fodder, for which a generous price will be given.¹⁰

Some of the wagons went on across the mountains to Nashville, but most

* This temporary settlement should not be confused with Manchester, the county seat of Coffee County, which did not come into existence until several years later.

of Middle Tennessee's imports were sent by wagon from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and then by river down the Ohio and up the Cumberland, or by water to Kentucky and by way of Lexington to Nashville. After the Mississippi River was opened, some of Nashville's imports came from New Orleans, but this was difficult before the coming of the steamboat. Most of Middle Tennessee's exports went down the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi to New Orleans by flatboat or keelboat. At the Crescent City both the flatboats and the cargoes—salt pork, whiskey, hemp, tobacco, cotton, flour, bar and cast iron, lime, and animal skins—were sold, and the boatmen returned over the Natchez Trace (after it was opened in 1802) to Nashville or took passage on sailing vessels to Philadelphia or Baltimore and from there returned to Tennessee.¹¹

According to the French traveler, F. A. Michaux, who visited Knoxville in 1802, East Tennesseans sent some "flour, cotton, and lime to New Orleans by the river Tennessee; but this way is not so much frequented by the trade; the navigation of this river being very much encumbered."¹² As early as June 19, 1795, however, the Knoxville *Gazette* reported the departure of five flatboats down the river. Some of the towns farther upstream, especially Kingsport, which for some time was called "Boatyard," became important shipping points. From that place not only the products of James King's iron works but also the salt produced by William King at Saltville, Virginia, and other commodities were shipped to various points down the river system, including New Orleans.¹³

Religious Development—Very soon after the first permanent settlers came into the Tennessee country, they were joined by preachers of the gospel, whose presence was greatly needed to counteract the debasing influences of the frontier environment. A large proportion of the settlers north of the Holston were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. Since they were considered for years to be in Virginia, they came naturally under the care of the Presbyterian preachers in the southwestern portion of that colony, who extended their activities across the unmarked boundary into what is now Tennessee. Probably the first was the Reverend Charles Cummings, who established in 1772 a church at the site of Abingdon and considered the North Holston settlements a part of his charge.* It probably was largely for his use that a chapel, later called the Taylor Meeting House, was built near the site of Blountville as early as 1773. It is likely, however, that it was used by any itinerant preacher of any denomination who happened to come into the neighborhood. Cummings and the Reverend Joseph Rhea accompanied the Christian expedition of 1776 as chaplains. To Cummings

* His name heads the list of petitioners, in 1776, from the western part of Fincastle County, Virginia, many of whom lived south of the present Virginia line, asking for a division of the county. The result was the creation of Washington County, with its county seat at Abingdon. Price (ed.), "Two Petitions," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 21 (1949), 99-100. According to tradition, Cummings always carried his rifle with him to the pulpit.

probably should go the credit for establishing the first Presbyterian congregation on Tennessee soil, but the honor is usually given to the Reverend Samuel Doak, who organized the "Salem Congregation"—and also a school—in Washington County near Jonesboro in 1780. Previously he had preached in Sullivan County and in what is now southwestern Virginia. As mentioned earlier, he gave his blessing to the soldiers of the King's Mountain campaign in 1780.

By 1785 the Abingdon Presbytery was formed to include the western churches in both Virginia and North Carolina. The next year it was divided; the new presbytery, Transylvania, had jurisdiction over both the Kentucky settlements and those in the Cumberland Valley, including the congregation which had been organized by the Reverend Thomas Craighead in Davidson County. In the East Tennessee country there were as many as twenty-six congregations by 1797, and Abingdon Presbytery was divided, with the more western churches being known as Union Presbytery. The insistence of the Presbyterian church upon having an educated ministry made it difficult to supply the growing demand with qualified preachers, but there were several outstanding Presbyterian divines, in addition to those mentioned, who were responsible for the dominant position of Presbyterianism on the early Tennessee frontier. Among the most notable were James and Hezekiah Balch, Samuel Henderson, Samuel Carrick, and Gideon Blackburn. One of them, however, Hezekiah Balch, illustrated the tendency toward disagreements by being converted to Hopkinsianism, for which he was censured by the general assembly of the church in 1798.¹⁴

Almost simultaneously with the Presbyterians, preachers of the Baptist faith became active in the Tennessee country. Next to the Quakers the Baptists probably were the most seriously persecuted dissenters in the seaboard regions of Virginia and North Carolina, where the Church of England was the established church, and many of them came across the mountains in search of religious freedom as well as economic betterment. Early historians of the Baptist denomination mention two "traditional" churches in the Holston Valley which were broken up by the Indian troubles of 1774. Since Dunmore's War of that year did not cause much trouble along the Holston, they may have meant the Cherokee War of 1776. The first two Baptist preachers known to have settled in the Tennessee country were Matthew Talbot and Jonathan Mulkey, who came to the Watauga settlement and to Carter's Valley, respectively, as early as 1775. Mulkey was wounded in Abram's raid through Carter's Valley in 1776.* Whether or not they did much preaching is unknown, but it is probable that they did, for the typical Baptist minister of the early days was a farmer-preacher, who would leave his plow in the field and travel for miles on Sundays to preach

* See Chapter VI. According to Ramsey, *Annals*, 140, 143-44, the Watauga Fort (Fort Caswell) was built on land previously occupied by "an old settler," Matthew Talbot; and Mulkey settled in Carter's Valley in the "late fall of 1775."

to scattered congregations. Unfortunately, no records of any churches they organized are available.* The first Baptist church in Tennessee about which there is definite evidence was the Buffalo Ridge Church in Washington County established in 1778 or 1779. The Reverend Tidence Lane, who had been converted by the famous Shubal Stearns of the Sandy Creek Church of North Carolina, came to minister to the large number of that congregation who had moved to the Tennessee country following the Battle of the Alamance.

In 1786 seven Baptist churches in the East Tennessee region were organized into the Holston Association. The same year Sulphur Fork, the first Baptist church in Middle Tennessee, came into existence with John Grammer as pastor. Ten years later, however, when Mero District Association was organized for that area, it included only five churches. The mis-named Tennessee Association—since it was confined to East Tennessee—was organized with nineteen churches in 1802. Although fifteen or more of these came out of Holston, that association still reported twenty-seven churches and 1,795 members in 1803. In addition, there were some churches in the area which were not represented in any association, in view of the independence of individual congregations so characteristic of Baptist policy and also because of doctrinal differences. According to some writers, the rapid growth of the Baptists on the frontier was due in part to the fact that this denomination did not place as much emphasis as did the Presbyterians on the need for an educated ministry. A special "call" to preach, together with the inspiration of the Spirit, was considered an adequate qualification. Not only did the frontiersmen believe that an untrained preacher was better than no preacher at all, but they were made uncomfortable by the "highfalutin" language of the educated parsons and preferred someone closer to their own scale of knowledge.¹⁵

Another type of preacher who could talk on the level of the illiterate pioneers was the sturdy Methodist circuit rider. The first of these in Tennessee was Jeremiah Lambert, who was assigned by the Annual Conference of 1783 to the newly-formed Holston Circuit in what is now southwestern Virginia and northeastern Tennessee. It had about sixty members, and Lambert preached to them—and seventeen more by the end of the year—in their scattered homes. The year of his death, 1786, in the West Indies, the first Methodist church in Tennessee, Acuff's Chapel, was built near Blountville. The next year Holston became a district, composed of two circuits, and in 1788 it held the first conference west of the mountains, at Keywood in Virginia, which was attended by the noted Bishop Francis Asbury. That famous Methodist leader made the first of his sixty-two trips across the Appalachians on that occasion. While traveling

* It is suggested by Merritt, *Early History of Carter County*, 71-82, that Talbot may have organized the Sinking Spring Church of Carter County under its earlier name Watauga River Church in 1775-1776. See also Taylor, *Early Tennessee Baptists*, 135-48.

over the district he commented in his *Journal** on the disorders in the state of Franklin. In 1787 a new circuit, as a part of Kentucky District, was created for the Cumberland settlements, with Benjamin Ogden as its preacher. Methodism expanded rapidly in that area as well as in East Tennessee. The Methodist circuit system was well suited to the frontier but was hard on the circuit riders, many of whom died of consumption or other lingering diseases as a result of the hardships involved in covering regularly circuits extending 400-500 miles in length.¹⁶

The churches of all three denominations attempted to regulate the conduct of their members, and the records of individual churches are replete with references to admonitions and sometimes exclusion from fellowship of members for drunkenness, fighting, dishonesty, and other offences. But the period following the Revolutionary War was characterized by extreme moral laxity, and the work of the churches, supplementing that of the courts, had relatively little effect.** The times being ripe for a spiritual awakening, a "Great Revival" began in the West about 1799, which had a profound influence. Beginning under the leadership of a Presbyterian preacher named James McGready, in Logan County, Kentucky, it rapidly spread to other denominations and into Tennessee. The movement was characterized by extreme emotionalism, especially at the extended camp meetings to which the lonely pioneers flocked in immense numbers. Mob psychology and the intense excitement created by the emotional fervor of the preachers describing the horrors of the Day of Judgment resulted in mass hysteria and a number of strange bodily exercises such as falling, jerking, barking, and rolling. In the falling exercises persons would fall to the ground and remain unconscious for many hours. The "jerks" were described by one eyewitness as follows:

Nothing in nature could better represent this strange and unaccount-

* *The Journal of Rev. Francis Asbury* (3 vols., New York, 1821), II, 32-33. At another place in this fascinating diary he reported, in 1803, that he had "taken the itch; and considering the filthy houses and filthy beds I have met with, . . . it is perhaps strange that I have not caught it twenty times." *Ibid.*, III, 132.

** For examples of church regulation of conduct, see Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 191, and of county court fines for profanity, etc., *ibid.*, 187-88. Disregard both of law and of religion was characteristic of the frontier, with Sabbath-breaking, fighting and brawling, drinking and carousing, horse-stealing, and murder extremely prevalent. Travel was dangerous because of the ravages of such outlaws as the "Big" and "Little" Harpe brothers (Micajah and Wiley) who began about 1795 a career of robbery and murder in Tennessee and the Southwest which lasted until the severed head of one was placed in the fork of a tree on the Natchez Trace, and the other was hanged in Mississippi in 1804. *Ibid.*, 189; Robert M. Coates, *The Outlaw Years* (New York, 1930), 21-70. A visitor to Knoxville in 1798 was told that "the Devil is grown so old that it renders him incapable of traveling and that he has taken up in Knoxville and there hopes to spend the remaining part of his days in tranquillity, as he believes he is among friends . . ." Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 185.

able operation than for one to goad another, alternately on every side, with a piece of red-hot iron. The exercise commonly began in the head which would fly backward and forward, and from side to side with a quick jolt which the person would naturally labor to suppress but in vain . . . He must necessarily go as he was stimulated, whether with a violent dash on the ground and bounce from place to place like a foot-ball, or hop round with head, limbs and trunk twitching and jolting in every direction, as if it must inevitably fly asunder.¹⁷

The results of the Great Revival, especially in regard to sectarianism, will be treated in another chapter, but there is no doubt that it greatly stimulated the religious life of the country. Although the extremes of emotionalism subsided, the camp meeting remained a feature of the religious practices of some denominations, particularly the Methodists, for many years.¹⁸

Educational Development—Although, as mentioned in earlier chapters, the first settlers in Tennessee were surprisingly literate, as shown by the almost complete absence of "marks" among the signatures on the Washington District petition of 1776 and Cumberland Compact of 1780, the same could not be said of the next generation. Schools were scarce on the frontier, and those which were established usually were started by Presbyterian ministers who combined the professions of preaching and teaching. They were the best educated persons in the community, since that church required that its ministers have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent; and they wished not only to supplement their pay as preachers but also to provide training for other Presbyterian ministers. Thus, when Samuel Doak organized the Salem Church near Jonesboro in 1780, he also started a school, which was incorporated as Martin Academy by North Carolina in 1783* and reincorporated by the state of Franklin in 1785. It was given a charter as Washington College by the Territory South of the River Ohio in 1795, and the next year it granted its first two A.B. degrees to James Wither- spoon and John W. Doak (a son of Samuel). When President Doak returned from the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1798, he brought with him on packhorses the nucleus of a library** for his "log college."¹⁹

The next institution of learning in Tennessee was Davidson Academy, chartered in 1785 and established near Nashville the next year by another Pres-

* It thus rivals Transylvania Seminary of Kentucky, chartered by Virginia in 1783, as the first institution of learning west of the Blue Ridge, but Transylvania apparently did not open until 1787. Posey, *Presbyterian Church*, 54.

** Two years earlier Hezekiah Balch had brought back from the East a large number of books and some mathematical equipment for the still unopened Greeneville College. Ragan, *Tusculum College*, 8-9. There is some evidence, however, that when Doak first came into the Holston Valley he was "driving before him an old 'flea-bitten grey' horse, loaded with a sackful of books." Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, II, 276.

byterian teacher-preacher, the Reverend Thomas Craighead. He had been induced by James Robertson, the sponsor of the academy's incorporation, to come to the Cumberland region and assume that dual role. As will be noted later, the institution became Cumberland College in 1806 and the recipient of Middle Tennessee's share of the college grant under the land compact of that year.**²⁰

Several months before the legislature of the Southwest Territory incorporated Washington College, it chartered two other colleges: Greeneville, on September 3, 1794, and Blount, seven days later. The president of the former, Hezekiah Balch, was the third graduate, along with Doak and Craighead, of the Eastern training school of Presbyterian ministers, New Jersey College (now Princeton University), to come to Tennessee and combine the professions of preaching and teaching. Greeneville College did not open until 1802, and in the post-Civil War period combined with Tusculum under the latter's name.²¹

The origin of Blount College (the future University of Tennessee) was a "Seminary" opened in 1793 by the Reverend Samuel C. Carrick at his home near the fork of the Holston and French Broad, four miles above Knoxville. He had advertised in the Knoxville *Gazette*, December 1, 1792, that a "Competent Introduction" to the Latin and Greek languages would be taught, and also the English language, geography, logic, natural and moral philosophy, astronomy, and rhetoric. For two sessions a year of five months each he charged tuition of "seven Dollars per scholar for each session paid at entrance." After being chartered as Blount College, September 10, 1794, the institution continued to operate at President Carrick's home at least until May, 1798, when, according to a letter written by Governor William Blount, after whom the school was named, "the buildings of the college will be in readiness for the reception of 40 scholars."²² Whether the first and only building owned by Blount College—constructed on a lot at Gay and Clinch streets sold by James White to the trustees, June 4, 1795, for \$30.00—was ready by May, 1798, is unknown, but it is certain that the anticipated "40 scholars" were not available. In 1803 the institution was in such a depressed state that one of the trustees proposed that it be abandoned and that the Presbyterians of Knoxville respond to the appeal of Dr. Charles C. Coffin of Greeneville College and shift their support to that institution. Governor Archibald Roane, however, in a meeting of the Blount College trustees, objected to that proposal, and the members of the board immediately subscribed \$1,000 to prevent the future state university from dying in its infancy.²³

According to its charter, Blount College was supposed to be nonsectarian, with students of all denominations eligible to admission and assured of "a like, fair, generous and equal treatment." This provision was unique but also difficult to enforce, with the president and only teacher being the first Presbyterian preacher in Knox County. Throughout its entire ante bellum history the insti-

** It became the University of Nashville in 1826, and eventually Peabody College for Teachers.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Ayres Hall, Main Campus of The University of Tennessee

tution was plagued with sectarian controversies. Blount College was also unique in another respect, in being co-educational for a short period of time. The first historian of the institution, Moses White, writing in 1879, had access to a "College Book of Students and Accounts," 1804-1809 (no longer extant), in which he found the names of several girl students. He recorded the names of the first five* enrolled, one of whom was Barbara Blount, the daughter of the deceased governor. Since Barbara was only twelve years of age in 1804, and one of the others, Polly McClung, later attended, in 1809-10, a female academy in North Carolina, it is very likely that these "co-eds" were enrolled in elementary rather than college courses. The only A.B. degree granted by Blount College was conferred on William E. Parker in 1806. The next year, as will be discussed in a later chapter, the institution became East Tennessee College and was endowed with a land grant under the Compact of 1806.²⁴

* Their names have been given to five sections of a girls' dormitory building at the University of Tennessee.

There was not much difference between the academies or seminaries and colleges in pioneer Tennessee.* The colleges were authorized to confer degrees and awarded the A.B. to a small number of students who progressed far enough in the classical languages and allied subjects to warrant them, but the majority of their students were in a sub-collegiate department. Since there were no public schools, the colleges and academies supplied practically all the educational facilities available beyond that given at the mother's knee or by an occasional tutor (who usually served as a clerk) employed by a wealthy family. And the clientele of the colleges and academies was limited to the children of the well-to-do. Education was considered unnecessary for the children of the poorer class. The later development of "common schools" will be discussed in another chapter.²⁵

* The only other schools known to have existed in Tennessee before 1806 were Union Academy, started by the Reverend Isaac Anderson in Knox County in 1801 (which was a predecessor of Maryville College), and Valladolid Academy, which opened near Nashville in 1805.

CHAPTER XII—NOTES

1. Stephen B. Weeks, "Tennessee: A Discussion on the Sources of its Population and Lines of Immigration," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (December, 1916), 246-49.
2. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 183.
3. Frank L. Owsley, "The Pattern of Migration and Settlement on the Southern Frontier," *Journal of Southern History*, XI (May, 1945), 147-76.
4. Williams, *Revolutionary War*, 4-10; William Flinn Rogers, "Life in East Tennessee Near the End of the Eighteenth Century," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 29; Margaret Burr DesChamps, "Early Days in the Cumberland Country," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (September, 1947), 195-204; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 146-51.
5. *Ibid.*; Rogers, "Life in East Tennessee," 29-30; Elizabeth Skaggs Bowman, "Swan Pond: Francis Alexander Ramsey's Stone House, A Tennessee State Shrine," *E.T.H.S., Publications*, No. 27 (1955), 9-18; David Edwin Harrell, "James Winchester; Patriot," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (December, 1958), 317; Albert C. Holt, "The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, VIII (April, 1924), 42-46, 47-51, 54-56.
6. *Ibid.*, 24-28; DesChamps, "Early Days in the Cumberland Country," 206-10; Rogers, "Life in East Tennessee," 33-36; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 208-09.
7. Holt, "Economic and Social Beginnings," 32-42; Samuel C. Williams, "Early Iron Works in the Tennessee Country," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (March, 1947), 39-46; Masterson, *William Blount*, 220; Paul A. Counce, "Social and Economic History of Kingsport before 1908" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939), frontispiece map, 32; Robert E. Corlew, *A History of Dickson County* (Dickson, 1956), 15.
8. Samuel C. Williams, "The South's First Cotton Factory," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, V (September, 1946), 212-21.

9. F. A. Michaux, *Travels to the Westward of the Alleghanys* (London, 1805), 89.
10. Quoted in Holt, "Economic and Social Beginnings," 29.
11. Michaux, *Travels*, 81-82; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 187.
12. Michaux, *Travels*, 89.
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14. Williams, *Dawn*, 379, 427; *Revolutionary War*, 10, 53, 145, 163; Walter B. Posey, *The Presbyterian Church in the Old Southwest* (Richmond, 1952), 11-32; Theron Alexander, Jr., "The Covenanters Come to Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 13 (1941), 36-46; Edwin J. Best, "New Providence Presbyterian Church," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 30 (1958), 75-81.
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19. Posey, *Presbyterian Church*, 49-51; Howard Ernest Carr, *Washington College* (Knoxville, 1935), 1-14; Holt, "Economic and Social Beginnings," 56-60.
20. *Ibid.*, 63-64; John M. Bass, "Rev. Thomas Craighead," *American Historical Magazine*, VII (January, 1902), 88-96; Putnam, *Middle Tennessee*, 234-35.
21. Ragan, *Tusculum College*, *passim*; Robert Stanley Rankin, "The Oldest College West of the Alleghanies," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 19-26, stresses the point that the Greeneville charter was the first granted west of the mountains using the name "college."
22. William Blouat to John Gray Blount, November 28, 1797, the John Gray Blount Papers (North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh), Box PC860. The writer is indebted to W. H. Masterson, Rice Institute, for extracts from this letter. The Governor also said that his son Billy was entering the College in December and that Carrick as a teacher was equal to any in America. Proof of this was the remarkable progress made by his former student, Hugh Lawson White,

a son of Gen. James White, the founder of Knoxville. Carrick (like Balch, before going to Princeton) had studied under the Reverend William Graham at Liberty Hall College (the present Washington and Lee University).

23. Journal of Dr. Charles Coffin, 1800-1822 (Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville), 93-94, of typewritten copy.
24. Moses White, *Early History of the University of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1879), 9-15; Stanley J. Folmsbee, "Blount College and East Tennessee College, 1794-1840: The First Predecessors of the University of Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 17 (1945), 22-28. This article has been reprinted, with the same pagination, in *The University of Tennessee Record*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Knoxville, 1946). The letters of Polly McClung from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to her father, 1809-10, are the prized possession of the Polly McClung Dormitory, University of Tennessee.
25. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 359-60; Rogers, "Life in East Tennessee," 41.

CHAPTER XIII

Political Developments, 1796-1809

SECTIONAL AND PERSONAL POLITICS—For more than a generation after Tennessee was admitted into the Union political contests in the state were based largely on sectional and personal differences rather than partisanship. The Federalist party gradually died out in the nation after the War of 1812, leaving the Republicans as the only national party; but the Republicans had been practically alone on the scene in Tennessee ever since 1796. The belief that the Federalists disregarded the vital interests of the West and their obviously partisan opposition to the admission of Tennessee effectually destroyed their influence in the state. There were a few federal officeholders who considered it necessary to continue their Federalist affiliations while that party was in control of the national administration from which they obtained their offices, but they sacrificed popularity with the people by so doing.

Probably one reason why William Blount had been so anxious to see Tennessee admitted into the Union was his desire to escape from a situation in which he was dependent upon the Federalists for his continuance in office. For some time he had been seriously at odds with the secretary of war and the other Federalists in the President's cabinet, and even Washington was beginning to treat him with extreme coolness. Throughout the year 1796 he underwent a political metamorphosis and gradually parted company with the Federalist party of which he had been formerly an ardent supporter. In September he wrote to Sevier that it would be in "the true interest of Tennessee in particular and the Union in general to promote the interest of Jefferson-Burr [Republicans] for President and Vice-President in the ensuing election"¹

During the first few years of statehood these two popular figures, Blount and Sevier, both now Republicans, were the heads of opposing political factions in Tennessee; but a young lawyer named Andrew Jackson was rising rapidly to prominence as a Blount lieutenant, and he was ultimately to succeed his chief after Blount passed from the scene. The Blount faction was much better organized than that of Sevier, but the latter had the advantage of immense personal popularity. Sevier was in complete control in East Tennessee, where he enjoyed the respect and friendship even of Blount. Only the disgruntled Tipton and a few of his supporters—old enemies of the state of Franklin period—opposed him. In Middle (then called West) Tennessee—the Mero Dis-

trict—Sevier was somewhat less popular, and there seems to have been some opposition in that area to his election to the governorship in 1796. This opposition was to a considerable degree sectional rather than personal, due to the resentment of the poor and isolated western region to the dominance of the state by the more populous eastern section. Thus sectionalism became a significant factor in Tennessee politics. The fact that both of the state's Senators, Blount and Cocke, were from East Tennessee was only partly counterbalanced by the residence of the one member of the House, Jackson, in the Mero District.*²

The Blount Conspiracy—William Blount's career in the United States Senate was cut short suddenly in 1797 by the exposure of his connection with a conspiracy designed to promote British conquest of Louisiana and the Floridas from Spain. The occasion for such an intrigue was the prevalence in the West of rumors, after France had joined Spain in its war against Britain in 1796, that Spain was about to cede back to France New Orleans and the territory west of the Mississippi which France had given to her in 1763. Such a development would render inoperative Pinckney's Treaty with Spain of 1795 which had given the Americans free navigation of the Mississippi River and the right of deposit at New Orleans. It was feared that if Napoleon Bonaparte should obtain control of the mouth of the Mississippi, he would close the river to Americans and attempt to incite revolution in the Western part of the United States. British occupation of New Orleans was greatly preferred to French occupation because the treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain of 1783 included a guarantee of free navigation of the Mississippi.**

The originator of the conspiracy was not Blount but John Chisholm, a tavern keeper of Knoxville who was still a British subject. He had acquired considerable influence with the Indians and had been used by Blount in negotiations with the Cherokee. In November, 1796, in Philadelphia, Chisholm approached the British minister, Robert Liston, and unfolded his plan. As eventually expanded*** his proposal was that expeditions of Americans and Indians with the aid of British money and ships should attack the Spanish Floridas and Louisiana and take possession of them for the British. As compensation the British would grant land to the members of the expeditions, make Chisholm

* In April, 1797, since Sevier's abbreviated first term as governor would end in September, Blount wrote to him expressing the hope that he would be reelected but suggesting Jackson for Cocke's position in the Senate and W. C. C. Claiborne for membership in the House of Representatives. Masterson, *William Blount*, 312.

** The conspirators of 1796-97 could not be expected to read the future and know that after the Spanish-French cession actually occurred in 1800, the United States would be able to buy Louisiana and obtain control of the Mississippi in 1803.

*** His first proposal involved only East Florida; he apparently added West Florida and Louisiana after his conversations with Blount. Masterson, *William Blount*, 307.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Jackson

superintendent of Indian affairs, make Pensacola and New Orleans free ports, and guarantee again the free navigation of the Mississippi. Liston expressed interest but could give no positive answer until he could obtain instructions from his government. Made impatient by delay, Chisholm finally induced Liston to pay his expenses to London, where he could deal directly with the British authorities. There his plan came to naught, for the British ministry flatly rejected it.³

Before leaving for London Chisholm talked loosely about his plan with several individuals, including Senator Blount, who not only became interested but, to Chisholm's consternation, proceeded to assume the leadership of the undertaking. The motives of Blount are clear. He and his brothers and associates had become greatly over-extended in their land speculations. There was an economic depression in 1796 which had depressed land values in the West, and this tendency was increased by the rumors about the imminence of French occupation of New Orleans. The Blounts faced financial bankruptcy; one of

their associates, David Allison, was already in serious difficulty. The Chisholm scheme, if successful, would restore land values in the West, provide the opportunities for immense profits from the various land speculative ventures, and save the Blounts from an imminent financial debacle. Success also would promote the interests of the Western people and make Blount a hero, with infinite opportunities for political advancement. Blount went to New York to confer with his fellow-speculator, Dr. Nicholas Romaine, who also was enthusiastic. It was decided that Romaine should go to England to talk with the British, while Blount, after the adjournment of Congress, would take the preliminary steps for putting the plans in operation in the Southwest.⁴

Blount's activities were interrupted, however, by the necessity of returning to Philadelphia for a special session of Congress, and he had to resort to the dangerous expedient of writing letters. Very explicit were his instructions, of April 21, 1797, to James Carey, an illiterate interpreter in the employ of the federal government. He was told that the plan mentioned by Chisholm to the British minister might be attempted in the fall, and if the Indians should act their part, he was sure it would succeed. A "man of consequence" (Romaine) had gone to England, and if he made arrangements as expected, Blount probably would be "at the head of the business on the part of the British." Carey was especially warned not to let the plan be discovered by "Hawkins, Dinsmoor, Byers* or any other person in the interest of the United States or Spain." He was told to keep up Blount's "consequence" among the Creek and Cherokee Indians and to do everything possible to reduce that of Benjamin Hawkins, for any influence Hawkins gained would be used against the plan. If the Cherokee should be dissatisfied with the way the boundary line according to Blount's treaty of 1791 was surveyed, the blame for the treaty should be shifted from Blount to President Washington; ". . . as he is now out of office, it will be of no consequence how much the Indians blame him." Carey was expressly instructed to take care of himself and of Blount, too, "for a discovery of the plan would prevent its success." He was told to "read this letter over three times, then burn it."⁵

Carey failed to follow these instructions and, probably under the influence of alcohol, allowed the letter to fall into the hands of one of the individuals against whom he had been warned, James Byers, who turned it over to Blount's personal enemy, David Henley, the agent of the War Department at Knoxville. Henley sent the letter by express to Secretary of War James McHenry and then instituted a local investigation of Blount's friends and associates. In Philadelphia, McHenry and Secretary of State Pickering, although both were un-

* Benjamin Hawkins was Blount's successor as Indian superintendent, with the title, "Principal Temporary Agent"; Silas Dinsmoor (or Dinsmore) was a temporary agent to the Cherokee; and James Byers was the factor at Tellico Blockhouse. Pound, *Benjamin Hawkins*, 99, 104, 124.

friendly toward Blount, were persuaded by the British minister, Liston, that the letter should be suppressed, since the Federalist party was already being attacked for being pro-British. President Adams, however, realized that even greater dangers were present in such a procedure and sent the papers to Congress. When asked in the Senate if he had written the letter to Carey, Blount evaded the question, but there is no doubt of his authorship. Senators Joseph Martin and William Cocke both testified that it was in Blount's handwriting, and Blount's papers, which were seized when he attempted to flee to North Carolina, revealed other incriminating documents. Blount virtually admitted authorship in correspondence with his friends in Tennessee:

In a few days you will see published, by order of Congress a letter said to have been written by me to James Carey. It makes a damnable fuss here. I hope, however, the people upon the Western Waters will see nothing but good in it, for *so I intended it*—especially for Tennessee.⁶

The House of Representatives adopted impeachment charges and asked that Blount's Senate seat be "sequestered." The Senate, however, expelled Blount by a vote of 25 to 1,* thereby throwing a serious obstacle in the way of a successful impeachment trial. The ex-Senator was permitted to file bonds for himself and his sureties and was then released, pending trial of the impeachment. As the disgraced politician found his way along back roads to North Carolina, it appeared that his political as well as his financial prospects were completely ruined. It was not long, however, before the efforts of loyal friends, such as Jackson and James White, to rehabilitate him began to have their effects. The Adams administration was very unpopular in Tennessee, and it was possible to depict Blount as a victim of partisan prejudice. In August, 1797, the name of one of his leading critics, Benjamin Hawkins, became anathema in East Tennessee. The federal commission he headed finally was able to survey the Holston Treaty line, despite obstructive tactics of the settlers and the state government. The survey left two or three hundred settlers on the Indian side of the line, and two companies of federal troops arrived to remove them forcibly from their homes. It is not surprising that when Blount arrived in Knoxville in September, a "large concourse of citizens," headed by James White, gave him a rousing welcome.⁷

The conclusive evidence, according to most accounts, of Blount's continuing popularity in Tennessee is the fact the speaker of the state senate, James White, resigned and Blount was immediately elected to the senate and to the speakership in his place. Actually, this did not occur until a year later, in the fall of 1798, and when White resigned he did so to accept appointment

* The one nay vote, by Henry Tazewell of Virginia, was on a technicality of procedure.

as a commissioner to negotiate with the Cherokee Indians. In 1797 Blount's friends had proposed that he become a candidate for the same position in the United States Senate from which he had been expelled; but although convinced that "nearly a Majority" in the legislature favored him, Blount declined to run.* For more than a year he was out of office, with impeachment charges hanging over his head, and his enemies certain that his political career had ended. His most recent biographer has shown, however, that but for another quirk of fate he might have become governor of the state of Tennessee. When elected speaker of the senate in December, 1798, he expected that Sevier would resign at the end of the session and he (Blount) would automatically succeed to the governorship. Sevier had just been appointed by Congress a brigadier general** of the provisional army of the United States then being recruited for the expected war with France. President Adams, however, agreed to a resumption of negotiations with the French, and the "Naval War of 1798" came to an end without the army seeing any service. Therefore, to Blount's great disappointment, Sevier did not resign, and he also decided to be a candidate for a third term in 1799.⁸

The articles of impeachment of William Blount were presented to the Senate early in 1798, but the trial did not begin until December 17. Blount was not present*** but was represented by counsel. The charges against Blount were that he had (1) planned to violate the neutrality of the United States, (2) conspired to violate the treaty of 1795 by inciting the Indians to attack Spanish territory, (3) conspired to reduce the influence of the American representative, Benjamin Hawkins, with the Indians, (4) seduced James Carey from his duty and trust, and (5) conspired to diminish the confidence of the Cherokee Nation in the government of the United States. The Blount defense, as presented by his lawyers, was mainly on the question of jurisdiction rather than his own guilt or innocence. They contended that Senators are not civil officers in the meaning of the impeachment clause of the Constitution and therefore are not subject to impeachment; that Blount was no longer a Senator, since he had been expelled; that he was not charged with committing any crimes in his capacity

* Two of his friends, however, Andrew Jackson and Joseph Anderson were elected to the Senate. Anderson formerly had been an opponent of Blount, but had come around to his support after the conspiracy.

** General Washington, who had been called from retirement to be commander in chief, criticised the appointment of Sevier, "celebrated" only for the "murder of Indians." North Callahan, *Henry Knox: General Washington's General* (New York, 1958), 370.

*** The sergeant at arms of the Senate had come to Knoxville to arrest him, but when Blount refused to return voluntarily, he was unable to recruit a posse to take him back by force. By a strange coincidence Blount was presiding over the impeachment of Judge David Campbell in the senate of Tennessee while his own trial was being conducted in the United States Senate.

as an officer of the government; and that if he had committed any criminal acts, the jurisdiction lay with the criminal courts rather than the Senate. After considerable debate the Senate decided on January 11, 1799, that it did not have jurisdiction in the case and dismissed the impeachment.*⁹

There is no doubt that Blount was guilty of the charges brought against him, but he should not be censured too harshly for the conspiracy. The provocation was great; and although his own personal interests were an important consideration, the interests of the West were also involved. It has been charged that the conspiracy gave the Spaniards an excuse for their delay in evacuating Natchez, north of the treaty line agreed to in 1795, but actually the fears engendered by the conspiracy led them to execute that treaty sooner than they might have done otherwise. Also, the United States government was led to pay more attention to the troubles and problems of the West than had been its custom—a trend brought to a climax by the Louisiana Purchase. Whether Blount's own efforts to recoup his political fortunes would have been successful can never be known. His sudden death on March 21, 1800, removed him from the political scene.¹⁰

The Jackson-Sevier Feud—Even before Blount passed away, Andrew Jackson, his lieutenant, had differences with Sevier which eventually developed into an outright feud of considerable political significance. Jackson, of Scotch-Irish descent, was born in 1767 near the North and South Carolina boundary, and both states claim his birthplace, though the weight of the evidence favors South Carolina. Orphaned at the age of fifteen, he had little opportunity to gain an education, and his legal training was based on a short period of reading law in the office of Spruce Macay in Salisbury, North Carolina. He came to the Tennessee country in 1788 with John McNairy, who had been appointed a judge for the Mero District. After lingering for some months in Jonesboro, where Jackson began his practice of law, they settled in Nashville. Jackson resumed his practice and soon was appointed attorney general for the district.

Jackson boarded with the widow of John Donelson, one of the founders of Nashville, and became interested in her daughter Rachel, who had left her jealous husband, Lewis Robards, in the Kentucky country and returned home. They were later reconciled and Rachel went back to Kentucky with Robards. It was not long, however, before she determined to leave him again; and Jackson as a family friend went to escort her through the dangerous wilderness to Nashville—an unfortunate decision, for it became the basis of the Robards'

* This first national impeachment trial established a precedent that members of Congress are not subject to impeachment and raised the question, which later became an issue in the Belknap case, whether impeachment could be escaped by resignation as well as by expulsion. Homer C. Hockett, *The Constitutional History of the United States* (2 vols., New York, 1939), I, 310-11.

charge that Rachel had "eloped" with Jackson. Also, Andrew went along as Rachel's protector on a journey by boat to Natchez, when she fled from Nashville to avoid being forcibly taken back to Kentucky by Robards. Robards changed his tactics, however, and petitioned the Virginia legislature for a divorce. The legislature merely authorized him to bring suit in the Virginia courts,* but Robards allowed the report to be circulated that a divorce had been granted. When this report reached Nashville, Jackson, without checking its accuracy, rushed down to Natchez and brought Rachel back with him as his bride. About two years later Robards finally filed his suit in a Kentucky court and was granted a divorce. Thereupon, it became necessary for Andrew and Rachel to get married a second time. Although Rachel's technical bigamy was the result of an unfortunate misunderstanding, it was frequently used by Jackson's opponents in political contests, especially in the presidential election of 1828. Such slights against his beloved Rachel enraged the impetuous Jackson, and it has been said that he kept his pistols in perfect condition for thirty-three years for use against anyone who dared to slander her.¹¹

One man who made such a mistake in the heat of argument was John Sevier, who was angry because of Jackson's charges that he had engaged in land frauds. The Jackson-Sevier feud had an earlier origin, however, in connection with the militia election of 1796. As mentioned earlier, the brigadier and major generals of the state militia were elected by the field officers. These elections were of great importance because high rank in the militia organization was recognized as a stepping stone to political advancement. It happened that the election of the field officers of the cavalry of the Mero District was set for the same day as the election of the brigadier general. In response to the requests of several Middle Tennesseans, Sevier signed blank commissions for the cavalry officers and sent them to General Robertson with instructions that he fill in the proper names and deliver them to the officers elected. This was partly in order that these officers might be able to participate in the election of the commander under whom they would serve; but there was also a vigorous contest between James Winchester, who opposed Sevier, and a Colonel Ford, who supported him, for election as brigadier general. It was believed that the newly-elected officers might be more inclined to favor Ford than the incumbents. Opposition to the use of the blank commissions was expressed by a number of individuals, among them Andrew Jackson, and they were not used. Winchester was elected. Subsequently, Jackson learned that Sevier had described his criticism as the "scurrilous expressions of a poor pitiful pettyfogging lawyer." Already angry because Sevier had successfully opposed his effort in November, 1796, to be elected major general of the militia, he wrote the Governor and demanded an explanation. Sevier's reply was conciliatory enough to avoid a

* In the Kentucky country, which at that time (1791) was still a part of Virginia. It did not become a state until 1792.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Erwin

duel, and in 1798 Sevier appointed Jackson to the bench of the superior* court of Tennessee, but the ill feeling remained.¹²

Meanwhile, Jackson had obtained evidence which indicated that extensive land frauds had been perpetrated in the land office at Nashville in the administration of North Carolina laws. He made the evidence available to the governor of North Carolina, who instituted an investigation which eventually revealed that a great number of Tennessee and North Carolina speculators were implicated, including Jackson's brother-in-law, Stockley Donelson. Donelson was convicted in a North Carolina court, as was also the North Carolina secretary

* Since this was the highest court of appeal, it was sometimes called the supreme court. Jackson's appointment was to fill a vacancy, but he was later elected by the legislature. Jackson had resigned from the Senate because of his financial difficulties.

of state, James Glasgow, but through the influence of the Blounts and others* the report of the legislative committee was suppressed.¹³ At the time of the trial of Glasgow, in 1800, Jackson was able to obtain copies of some letters which Sevier had written to the secretary of state in 1795, and these became the basis of his charges in 1803 that Sevier had engaged in fraud and bribery. The reasons for the delay in making use of the evidence were largely political, designed to aid Archibald Roane in his campaign for reelection as governor against Sevier who, after being out of the office for one term, was again eligible for the governorship. Two years earlier, Jackson had given the evidence to Roane, on the same day that a tie between Jackson and Sevier for major general had been broken by the Governor's casting the deciding vote in favor of Jackson. After gathering additional evidence, Jackson and Roane publicized the charges against Sevier in the campaign of 1803, but Sevier defeated Roane for the governorship by a majority of 1,663 votes. Before retiring from office Roane submitted the evidence to the legislature and recommended a legislative investigation.¹⁴

While the investigation was in progress the feud between Jackson and Sevier came to a bitter climax. They became involved in a contest of name-calling and abuse in front of the courthouse of Knox County, where Jackson was holding court. In the heat of anger Sevier declared that he knew of no service which Jackson had rendered the country except to take a "trip to Natchez with another man's wife." Jackson exploded: "Great God, do you mention *her* sacred name?" Had he not been armed merely with a sword cane, whereas Sevier had a cutlass, there probably would have been a bloody encounter there on the street. Instead, Jackson the next day challenged Sevier to a duel. Sevier replied on the same day with an acceptance, but since the state law prohibited dueling, he insisted that they meet outside the state. Jackson, although as a judge he should have been mindful of the law, claimed that Sevier's out-of-state requirement was a "mere subterfuge. In the town of Knoxville [he wrote] did you take the name of a Lady into your polluted lips, . . . and in the Neighborhood of Knoxville you shall atone for it or I will publish you as a coward and a poltroon." He then obscured his meaning by suggesting as an alternative place "the nearest point of the Indian boundry [*sic*] line." Sevier acknowledged this with a statement that his second would arrange a time and place.¹⁵

The subsequent letters and interviews are rather confusing and leave the impression that neither antagonist really desired to fight the duel, but each hoped to be able to cast the stigma of refusing to fight on the other. Each pro-

* Governor Sevier's attempts to prevent the removal of the land records from Nashville appear to have been justified, especially since he offered to permit the making of authenticated copies. Driver, *John Sevier*, 124-27. After the records were removed to Raleigh, plots to steal them and to burn down the building in which they were housed were frustrated. Masterson, *William Blount*, 332-34.

bably realized that if a duel occurred and resulted in the death of one of the contestants, the other would in effect have committed political suicide. Finally, Sevier wrote at the end of his communication to Jackson of October 10: "I shall not receive another letter from you, as I deem you a coward." Jackson then sent a definite challenge to fight where Sevier had suggested, in Virginia near Cumberland Gap. Sevier refused to receive the communication and then Jackson advertised him in the press as "a base coward and poltroon—he will basely insult but has not the courage to repair the Wound."¹⁶

A few days later, when Sevier was on his way to a conference with the Cherokee Indians, he and his party met Jackson and a friend at Southwest Point (Kingston), the place in the Indian country at which Jackson had suggested their duel might be fought. The reports made by eyewitnesses are so much in conflict that it is impossible to determine exactly what happened, but apparently the encounter was characterized by abusive language on both sides and the brandishing of pistols and other weapons. According to one report, the Governor had to hide behind a tree because he was temporarily disarmed when his horse wandered off with his pistols in the saddle-holsters. Finally, the two enemies were pacified and induced to remount and resume their respective journeys. In the eyes of contemporaries Jackson came out second best in the controversy. The people were simply unwilling to believe that the hero of King's Mountain and of thirty-five Indian campaigns was a coward; and the reputation, military and otherwise, of Andrew Jackson was yet to be made.¹⁷

Nor were the people willing to believe that Sevier was guilty of any serious fraud in his land dealings, as is indicated by his defeat of Roane in the election of 1803 and his reelection for two more terms as governor. His friends in the legislature of 1803 were able to remove from the report of the committee which investigated the Jackson-Roane charges any implication that Sevier was guilty. Modern historians are disagreed on that point. One distinguished historian insists that "there is not a flaw in the evidence as it was presented in 1803"; but according to Sevier's leading biographer, his innocence or guilt "is not possible of determination."¹⁸

The charges dealt with the following activities. During the Revolutionary War Sevier had purchased a large quantity of land which had been confiscated by North Carolina from persons alleged to be Tories. Many of these persons, however, were able by cautious conduct to evade the Tory charge and retain their estates. Sevier was therefore left holding the warrants. He had the right to re-locate them on other unappropriated land in Washington County, but there was practically no land of any value available east of the Cumberland Mountains. Desiring to avoid the loss of the large amount of money he had invested, he arranged in 1795 to have surveyed on those warrants more than 50,000 acres in Middle Tennessee, hoping to make it appear that they were acquired under the Land Grab Act of 1783 rather than the Confiscation Act of 1779. Since

the consideration to be paid under the two laws was different, he sent the warrants to Glasgow and asked him as a favor to insert on the face of the grants ten pounds (1783 price) in the place of fifty shillings (the price under the 1779 law), and re-enter the lands as supernumeraries. He also gave Glasgow three warrants for 640 acres each, saying in his letter that this was the amount "which I considered myself indebted to you for fees, etc." It was charged by Jackson that these three warrants, worth at least \$960, constituted a bribe to Glasgow for performing an illegal act.* Sevier and his friends contended that the consideration on the face of the warrants was of no real consequence and that the changing of the amount by Glasgow was no crime. Also, the payment made to Glasgow, they claimed, was no more than a reasonable compensation for legitimate services rendered, and therefore it could not be considered as a bribe. Although there were undoubtedly serious irregularities in Sevier's actions, the people appear to have condoned them; and it was Jackson rather than Sevier who suffered the greater loss of popularity as a result of the controversy.¹⁹

Sevier obtained partial revenge when the legislature, in November, 1803, divided the state militia into two divisions, thus limiting Jackson's command as major general to the area west of the Cumberland Mountains. Also, Sevier ignored Jackson and appointed an East Tennessean, Colonel George Doherty, to command an expedition sent to Natchez, under instructions from President Jefferson, to be ready to use force if necessary in taking possession of the Louisiana Purchase.** Since the troops came largely from the Mero District, Sevier was severely criticised for placing them under the command of an East Tennessean. Actually, force was not needed and the troops returned to Nashville without having engaged in any hostilities.²⁰

In 1804 Jackson resigned from the superior court and hoped to receive the appointment as governor of the Territory of Orleans, but Jefferson appointed William C. C. Claiborne to that position. Two years later two developments occurred which seriously injured Jackson's prestige. One was his duel with Charles Dickinson and the other his association with Aaron Burr at the time when the former Vice President was engaged in a conspiracy.

The Dickinson-Jackson duel grew out of a trifling dispute over the payment of a forfeit for a horse race which was called off, but Dickinson had aroused Jackson's anger by making uncomplimentary remarks concerning Rachel's matrimonial difficulties. The duel was held in Kentucky to avoid violation of the Tennessee law. Knowing that Dickinson had the reputation of being

* Another aspect of the charges was that Sevier probably was responsible, although it could not be proved, for the mysterious disappearance of the land records of Washington County, since it would be to his interest to avoid the complication of duplicate numbers on land warrants which his plan involved.

** Spain had ceded the area to France in 1800, but had not given up possession when Napoleon sold it to the United States in 1803; and she protested that France had no right to sell it.

the best pistol shot in the West, Jackson decided to take advantage of the rule which had been adopted for this engagement allowing each contestant to have only one shot. He feared that Dickinson's bullet might spoil his own aim; therefore, wearing (according to tradition) an ill-fitting coat to make it difficult for his opponent to locate his heart, he held his fire until after Dickinson had discharged his pistol. Jackson was hit and seriously wounded, but did not fall. He then took careful aim at his helpless opponent and pulled the trigger, but the hammer stopped at the half-cock. He aimed again and fired, mortally wounding Dickinson. It has been claimed by Jackson's apologists that the General's reason for not showing magnanimity was his fear that he would not survive Dickinson's bullet and that he did not want to die and leave his enemy alive. Since Jackson, however, refused to reveal the extent of his own injury, many critics at the time considered his killing of Dickinson practically the same as murder.²¹

About a year before the Dickinson duel and again a few months after that event Jackson entertained the former Vice President, Aaron Burr, at the Hermitage and presented him at formal dinners in Nashville. Because Burr had killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel, his political career in the East had ended, but he was still very popular in the West. Capitalizing on that popularity he developed plans for a conspiracy, the nature of which is still obscure. It appears to have included an effort to separate the Western states from the East, but it seems certain that Burr did not inform Jackson of that design. Instead, he told Jackson that he planned to lead an expedition into Spanish Mexico as soon as the anticipated war with Spain occurred and that he had the approval of the United States government. A firm of which Jackson was a member was given a contract to build boats for the project, and Jackson indirectly encouraged the recruitment of soldiers. A short time later he obtained information from a visitor, a Colonel Fort, which led him to suspect that a treasonable design was involved and that Burr was working with the notorious Kentucky conspirator, General James Wilkinson, then in command of American troops in the Southwest. Jackson immediately wrote letters of warning to several Tennesseans and to President Jefferson; and when Burr arrived in Nashville, he demanded an explanation. Burr again assured Jackson that he had no treasonable purpose and was allowed to depart with the two boats which Jackson's firm had completed.

Meanwhile, Burr's co-conspirator, Wilkinson, had betrayed him and had written to Jefferson exposing the plot, and the President had issued a proclamation calling for Burr's arrest. This news arrived in Nashville soon after Burr's departure, and Jackson immediately put two of his militia brigades under arms and called for the recruitment of volunteers. Although his purpose undoubtedly was to defend the Union, the widespread rumors concerning the Burr intrigue included the story that Jackson was organizing an army to support Burr's projected attack on New Orleans, a report which was accepted by the irresponsible

Richmond *Enquirer*. Therefore, Secretary of War Henry Dearborn sent Jackson a letter in which he delicately hinted that the General might be involved in the intrigue. Jackson's reaction was one of intense anger. It appears that he wrote several drafts of his reply. In one draft, which fortunately he did not send, he said he had received Burr as a "patriot in exile. . . . But sir when prooff [*sic*] shews him to be a treator [traitor], I would cut his throat with as much pleasure as I would cut yours on equal testimony."²²

After Burr had been arrested and taken to Richmond for trial, Jackson apparently became convinced that he was innocent and that his betrayer, Wilkinson, was the real culprit. Jackson presented this viewpoint while haranguing the crowds around the courthouse in Richmond and thus led many critics to conclude that he and Burr were tarred with the same brush. Although Burr was acquitted because of the failure of the prosecution to prove the commission of an overt act, public opinion was still inclined to condemn him; and some of the condemnation rubbed off on Jackson, although he actually was guilty of no treasonable intent. Convinced that the Jefferson administration was protecting the man he considered the real traitor, General Wilkinson, Jackson broke with the President and refused to support his choice as a successor, James Madison, in the election of 1808. Relegated to a position of relative political impotence, Jackson held no public office except as general of the militia until the War of 1812 gave him the opportunity to retrieve his fortunes.²³

Meanwhile, Jackson's enemy, John Sevier, was reelected governor, without significant opposition, in 1805 and 1807. Willie (pronounced Wylie) Blount, William's half-brother, defeated William Cocke for the governorship in 1809 and was reelected without opposition in 1811 and 1813. Sevier, who had been elected to the state senate in 1809, was again eligible to run for governor in 1811, but he preferred not to oppose the Middle Tennessean, Blount. He probably realized that this section, where he had never been very popular, had increased so rapidly in population following the large acquisitions of land from the Indians in 1805 and 1806 that his chances for success were definitely limited. Instead, he became a candidate to represent his East Tennessee district in the United States House of Representatives, where he served until his death in 1815. His death occurred in the Alabama country, where he was engaged in surveying an Indian boundary line. While in Congress, in 1811-12, he was closely identified with the "War Hawks" who desired war with Britain, as were also the other members of the Tennessee delegation²⁴—an illustration of the popularity of the War of 1812 in Tennessee, which will be treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.—NOTES

1. Masterson, *William Blount*, 296-98.

2. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 164-66; Driver, *John Sevier*, 117, 123.

3. Good accounts of the conspiracy are: Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 193-200; Masterson, *William Blount*, 302-47; Isabel Thompson, "The Blount Conspiracy," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 2 (1930), 3-21. Interesting but not wholly reliable is Kate White, "John Chisholm; A Soldier of Fortune," *ibid.*, No. 1 (1929), 60-66. Much of the source material is in Frederick J. Turner (ed.), "Documents on the Blount Conspiracy," *American Historical Review*, X (April, 1905), 574-606.
4. Masterson, *William Blount*, 298-311.
5. *Ibid.*, 311-13. The letter is printed in *Annals of Congress*, 5 Cong., 2349-50.
6. Masterson, *William Blount*, 315-22. Italics are the author's.
7. *Ibid.*, 321-31.
8. *Ibid.*, 326-27, 337-39, 342.
9. *Ibid.*, 339-42; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 199-200; Thompson, "The Blount Conspiracy," 11-14.
10. *Ibid.*, 20-21; Masterson, *William Blount*, 318, 342-47; Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803* (New York, 1934), 66, 115.
11. Good accounts of Jackson's early career are: John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols., New York, 1911), I, 3-24; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson, The Border Captain* (New York, 1933), 3-78. See also, Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 201-02.
12. *Ibid.*, 202-03; Driver, *John Sevier*, 119-24, 168-74; A. V. Goodpasture, "Genesis of the Jackson-Sevier Feud," *American Historical Magazine*, V (April, 1900), 115-23; S. C. Williams (ed.), "Executive Journal of Gov. John Sevier," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 120-21.
13. Masterson, *William Blount*, 332-34.
14. Driver, *John Sevier*, 128, 146-55.
15. *Ibid.*, 176-80; James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 97-98; Clayton, *Davidson County*, 142-43.
16. *Ibid.*, 144-45. This work prints much of the correspondence involved.
17. *Ibid.*, 145-46; Driver, *John Sevier*, 182-89; James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 99-100; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, I, 60.
18. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 174; Driver, *John Sevier*, 165.
19. *Ibid.*, 146-67; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 174-77; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 160-80.
20. Samuel C. Williams, "Tennessee's First Military Expedition (1803)," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, VIII (October, 1924), 171-90; Driver, *John Sevier*, 191-94.
21. James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 102-04, 117-25; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, I, 61-64.
22. Quoted in *ibid.*, 51.
23. The best accounts of the relationship of Jackson to the Burr Conspiracy are: *ibid.*, 37-54; James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 108-41; James B. Ranck, "Andrew Jackson and the Burr Conspiracy," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Ser. 2, Vol. I (October, 1930), 17-28; Joe Gray Taylor, "Andrew Jackson and the Aaron Burr Conspiracy," W.T.H.S., *Papers*, No. 1 (1947), 81-90; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 212-14. See also Thomas P. Abernethy, *The Burr Conspiracy* (New York, 1954), *passim*, which absolves Jackson of any treasonable involvement.
24. Driver, *John Sevier*, 198-217.



CHAPTER XIV

Tennessee and the War of 1812

POPULARITY OF THE WAR IN TENNESSEE—The news of the outbreak in 1812 of the second war with Great Britain was received with rejoicing in Tennessee. The people of the state, like other Westerners, were very nationalistic and patriotic, and for several years they had resented with indignation the numerous infringements by the British on American rights on the high seas. Extremely sensitive about individual and personal rights, they were especially angered by the British impressment of American sailors into the British navy, even though few Westerners were involved. When, in 1807, the British man of war, the *Leopard*, fired on the American war vessel, the *Chesapeake*, because its captain refused to permit a search for alleged deserters from the British navy, mass meetings of citizens in Tennessee adopted resolutions of protest, and Governor Sevier expressed his indignation in a message to the legislature. The Jeffersonian policy of placing an embargo on American trade with Europe was approved by Tennesseans even though it seriously injured their economy by reducing the markets for their surplus products. They were good Republicans and were inclined to blame British policy rather than Jefferson's retaliatory measures for their economic distress. Also, some argued, the embargo would encourage manufacturing in the United States—and especially in East Tennessee—and thus make the country more self-sufficient and independent.¹

Tennesseans, like other Westerners, were also ardent expansionists and looked with hungry eyes toward British Canada and also toward the Florida possessions of Britain's ally, Spain. Especially desirous were they to see Mobile in American hands. They highly approved of Jefferson's claim that this West Florida country was included in the Louisiana Purchase,* but Spain had refused to relinquish possession. Thus the Tennesseans' hopes of making effective use of a shortcut to the Gulf of Mexico—taking advantage of the nearness of the headwaters of the rivers which reach the Gulf at Mobile to the southern branches of the Tennessee—were frustrated. In view of the decline in the prices paid for their produce at New Orleans, due to restrictions on European trade, the reduction

* Jefferson claimed that since West Florida had been originally French territory it was included in Spain's cession of Louisiana to France in 1800, which was sold to the United States by Napoleon in 1803.

in transportation costs which would result from exporting through Mobile would be a distinct advantage. When the war began, Jackson, believing that Spanish as well as British territory would be subject to attack, proclaimed to his militia:

You burn with anxiety to learn on what theater your arms will find employment. Then turn your eyes to the South! Behold in West Florida, a territory whose rivers and harbors, are indispensable to the prosperity of the western [Middle Tennessee], and still more so to the eastern division of our state. Behold there likewise the asylum from which an insidious hand incites to rapine and bloodshed, the ferocious savages, who have just stained our frontier with blood²

The restlessness of the Southern Indians, especially the Creeks, was considered by Tennesseans to be the result of British as well as Spanish incitement. It came, they believed, from Canada and through the medium of delegations of Northern Indians, like that of Tecumseh* in 1811; and the Northern Indians actually went to war against the Americans in that year. The only way to peace with the Indians, and incidentally to easier acquisition of their lands by the whites, would be to drive the British out of Canada. While Britain was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Napoleon, such a conquest, the Westerners believed, could easily be accomplished. Felix Grundy, a congressman from the Nashville district, declared in 1811 in the House of Representatives: "I therefore feel anxious not only to add the Floridas to the South, but the Canadas to the North of this empire."³

It was the Western "War Hawks" in Congress, under the leadership of Grundy of Tennessee and Henry Clay of Kentucky, who forced the Madison administration to adopt a more vigorous policy toward Britain, leading to a strong presidential message which was followed by a declaration of war on June 18, 1812. The news arrived** in Tennessee in time to make the celebration of Independence Day, July 4, a riotous occasion. At a banquet in Rogersville one of the toasts which was drunk declared: "The 18th of June, 1812—May future ages be proud to celebrate the day on which a virtuous Congress Declared War against imperial Britain." Governor Blount sent to Washington a promise of Tennessee support; even before war was declared, General Jackson had offered 2,500 volunteers to the President, with the promise to have

* R. S. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 166-75, has shown that Tecumseh on his visit to the Southern Indians actually did not advocate war; but his advocacy of joint action to prevent further white encroachment on Indian lands must have tended, even so, to induce a warlike spirit on the part of some of the Indians.

** A courier on horseback, Billy Phillips, brought the news 860 miles from Washington to Nashville in the record time of nine days. James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 151-52. In October the legislature adopted resolutions approving the declaration of war. White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 380-81.



(Courtesy Dyersburg Chamber of Commerce)

Dyersburg

them before Quebec in ninety days. The administration, however, had other plans for the invasion of Canada (which proved ineffectual), and the Tennesseans had to wait until later for an opportunity to participate in the war.⁴

The Natchez and East Florida Expeditions—In October, 1812, President Madison called on Governor Blount for 1,500 volunteers from Middle Tennessee to reinforce General Wilkinson at New Orleans, with a view to preparing for an invasion of West Florida. Although it was a bitter pill for Andrew Jackson to accept a subordinate command under Wilkinson, whom he hated, he was too anxious to get into the fight to decline the opportunity; therefore, he assumed command of the 2,070 volunteers who enrolled. The expedition journeyed in mid-winter to Natchez, where it was halted by orders from Wilkinson. Congress refused to sanction an invasion of West Florida, and Secretary of War John Armstrong sent orders to Jackson to disband his troops where they were and return home. Refusing to throw his men adrift many miles from

their homes, Jackson led them back to Nashville along the Natchez Trace before dismissing them from service. The General endeared himself to his soldiers by walking the entire distance, so that his horses would be available for the transportation of the sick. One soldier is alleged to have remarked that he was as "tough as hickory"; thus originated the nickname, "Old Hickory," which followed Jackson for the remainder of his days.⁵

Meanwhile, East Tennesseans were disappointed because no call had been made upon them. Consequently, they organized an unauthorized expedition, unique in the annals of war. The adjutant general of the state militia, John Williams of Knoxville, recruited a mounted infantry force of 165 men, made up of the most respected citizens of the community and with a major general of the militia, John Cocke, serving in the ranks. The purpose was to chastise the Seminole Indians of East Florida who, under Spanish incitement, had been ravaging the Georgia frontier; but it was also expected that there would be an opportunity to participate in the conquest of East Florida on the behalf of the United States, if the Madison administration should decide to carry out its well known designs in that direction. On December 3, 1812, Williams wrote the President asking for orders, saying that in executing them, "not a man in the corps will entertain constitutional scruples on the subject of *boundaries*." The largely self-equipped expedition, augmented by a force of United States troops under Colonel T. A. Smith, was sent by General Thomas Flournoy into the Seminole country, where it defeated the Indians and destroyed several towns. But since Congress refused to permit occupation of this Spanish territory,* Flournoy discharged the Tennesseans and sent them home.⁶

The Creek War—In August, 1813, a faction of the Creek Indians called the "Red Sticks" attacked Ft. Mims in the southern Alabama country and massacred nearly all of its inhabitants. Although the chief aim of the attack was to kill the members of the mixed-breed Creeks of the opposing faction, friendly to the Americans, who had concentrated there, the unlimited nature of the massacre precipitated a war between the "Red Sticks" and the United States. Since these Indians became allies of the British,** the Creek War was in effect one

* Tennesseans were delighted to learn in the spring of 1813, however, that United States troops under Wilkinson had occupied Mobile to prevent its seizure by the British.

** One author claims, however, that the attack was not the result of British incitement, but an outgrowth of the civil war within the Creek Confederacy between the "Red Sticks," who resented American efforts to civilize them and desired to return to their primitive way of life, and the other faction, which desired to accept the civilizing influences. Also, the "Red Sticks" were angered by the execution at the insistence of the Americans of several Creeks who had murdered white people on the frontier and by the threat of invasion of the Creek country by Georgia. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 166-81.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that the leaders of the hostile faction were in contact with Tecumseh and other Northern chieftains already at war with the

phase of the War of 1812. Tennesseans had already felt the effects of Creek depredations, and the public clamor for action was so great that Governor Blount asked the legislature to provide for punitive expeditions without waiting for authority from the federal government.⁷ The legislature responded by raising 3,500 troops and appropriating \$300,000 for arms and equipment, for which reimbursement was expected from the United States treasury. In accord with the tradition which was to give Tennessee the name, "Volunteer State," recruitment was spirited and enthusiastic. Two armies were organized, one under the command of General Jackson in Middle Tennessee, and the other under General John Cocke in East Tennessee. The latter was to cooperate with an army of Georgians as well as with Jackson.⁸

Jackson had been seriously wounded in an affray* with Jesse and Thomas H. Benton a short time before, but he got out of bed to assume command. Jackson's plan of campaign was to build a supply base at the southernmost point on the Tennessee River, which he named Fort Deposit, and then cut a military road to the Coosa River at a point about fifty miles distant. There he built Fort Strother, only about thirteen miles from the Creek town of Tallushatchee. In the first important engagement of the war a part of Jackson's army under General John Coffee completely destroyed that town, not sparing a single warrior and even killing some women and children.** A short time later Jackson marched to the relief of the town of Talladega, inhabited by friendly Creeks who were besieged by the "Red Sticks." More than three hundred Indians were killed, but seven hundred managed to escape through a gap in the line caused by some militiamen breaking ranks.⁹

The complete defeat of the Creeks was delayed by a lack of cooperation on the part of General Cocke's army of East Tennesseans and friendly Cherokee and by a mutinous disposition of the troops. General Cocke insisted upon acting independently, and not knowing that a faction of the Creeks called the Hilli-

Americans on the side of the British. The legendary origin of the name "Red Sticks" is that Tecumseh had provided the Creeks with bundles of sticks painted red, one of which was to be broken every day; and when all were broken they were to begin the war. Pound, *Benjamin Hawkins*, 212 n. It is more likely that the name originated from the use by these Indians of crimson war clubs.

* The encounter was an outgrowth of Jackson's serving as a second in a duel between Jesse Benton and William Carroll. Although Thomas H. Benton and Jackson later became good friends, their relations were very strained during the remainder of the War of 1812 period. The implication in Chambers, "Thwarted Warrior," 33-34, is that Jackson prevented his subordinate, Benton, from getting into any action or achieving any military reputation during the war.

** David Crockett described this battle in his *Autobiography* (New York, 1923), 166-70: "We killed them like dogs; . . . burning a house with forty-six Indians in it." The next day the soldiers found some potatoes in the cellar of that house and were so hungry that they ate the potatoes even though "the oil of the Indians we had burned the day before had run down on them and they looked like they had been stewed with fat meat."

bees had sent messengers to Jackson to sue for peace, he sent General James White to attack them and thus ended the prospect for peaceful negotiation. The mutiny was due in the first place to a lack of supplies, caused by the failure of private contractors to live up to their commitments. Fortunately, Jackson's army was made up of two groups, United States volunteers and state militia. When the latter became mutinous, he was able to use the volunteers to keep them in line; later he used the militia to keep the volunteers from going home. Finally, Jackson promised that if supplies did not arrive in two days, he would order the evacuation of Fort Strother and march back to Tennessee. Four days passed and since the supplies had not arrived, the return march began. Twelve miles from the fort, however, they met the contractors with 150 beeves and nine wagons of flour. After the troops had assuaged their hunger, Jackson ordered them to march back to Fort Strother. The troops refused to return, and Jackson seized a musket, laid it across a horse's neck, and swore that he would shoot the first man who moved in the wrong direction. The army sullenly marched back to the fort.

Offensive operations again were delayed, this time because of disputes between Jackson and his men regarding the terms of service. One group of volunteers had been mustered in on December 10, 1812, for one year, and had accompanied Jackson on the Natchez expedition. They insisted that their term of service expired on December 10, 1813, but Jackson claimed that they could not count the time they had spent at home between the Natchez expedition and their recall to service for the Creek War. Even in the face of the threat of cannon fire, they agreed to remain only until reinforcements arrived; and when Jackson was joined by Cocke's East Tennesseans a few days later, he was forced to allow the volunteers to depart. He soon learned that the terms of service of Cocke's troops would expire in ten days, and he sent most of them home rather than waste rations on them. At Huntsville the retiring volunteers met General Coffee's mounted volunteers who were returning from a furlough to enable them to refresh their horses and get winter clothing. The terms of service of these men had also expired, and they argued that they were as much entitled to be discharged as the other volunteers. With the exception of a few*

* David Crockett claimed in his *Autobiography*, 65-66, that he was one of this group, but his discharge papers prove that he was not. He went home and did not reenlist until the next September. Because of his enmity toward Jackson at the time (1834) the *Autobiography* was written, he fabricated in that work a story of his participation in a direct defiance of Jackson near Fort Strother (when he actually was given a furlough along with the other cavalrymen), and then to reduce the stigma of desertion, he imagined himself a member of the small group which returned to camp in December. In other words, he wished for political purposes to claim that his defiance of Jackson was in his presence, rather than from a distance. S. J. Folmsbee and Anna Grace Catron, "The Early Career of David Crockett," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 28 (1956), 68-69; James A. Shackford, *David Crockett: The Man and the Legend* (Chapel Hill, 1956), 27-28.

of the men who responded to Jackson's written appeal that they remain in service, they decided to return home. The next dispute was with the state militia, which had volunteered under a state law for a three-months term of service but had been inducted into the United States forces under a law providing for a six-months tour of duty. Their three-months term would expire on January 4 and 14, and they demanded that they should be discharged on those dates in order that they might return home to take care of their families. Jackson insisted that they abide by the federal law and serve six months, but he finally agreed to refer the question to Governor Blount, who decided in favor of the men. When most of these militiamen had departed,* Jackson was left for a time with only 130 soldiers at Fort Strother, in a situation of extreme danger; but his subordinates were able to recruit a new army, and by March, Jackson had about two thousand men available for the renewal of the offensive against the Creeks.¹⁰

Actually, Jackson attempted to invade the Creek country in January, with a force of only about a thousand men, including two hundred friendly Indians, but he was attacked by a superior force at Emuckfau Creek and forced to retire toward Fort Strother. While crossing Enotachapco Creek he was attacked again, and only his own dauntless courage and that of General Coffee and Colonel William Carroll prevented annihilation. However, the Creeks suffered greater losses than the Americans.** After the arrival of Colonel John Williams with his 39th Regiment of United States regulars and Colonel Robert Hays with other troops, Jackson was ready in March to move again against the Creek stronghold of Tohopeka, located on the Tallapoosa River where it forms a bend in the shape of a horseshoe. In a bloody engagement, sometimes called the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, Jackson's army completely defeated the "Red Sticks" and brought the Creek War to an end. The Americans lost only forty-nine men killed and 157 wounded; but more than 800 of the enemy lost their lives.¹¹

Jackson as a War Hero—Jackson's victories were in striking contrast to the disastrous failures of most of the other American generals in the war, and he was rewarded by an appointment as a major general*** in the United States army

* Jackson sent his imprecations after them, wishing that each one had "a smok-tail in his teeth, with a petticoat as a coat of mail to hand down to posterity." He also severely criticized Governor Blount, who advised him to evacuate Fort Strother. Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, 108-09.

** Crockett's *Autobiography*, 66-68, describes these engagements as though he was a participant, but he was at home at the time. Folmsbee and Catron, "Early Career of David Crockett," 69-70. Even so, Crockett's actual services in the war were outstanding, especially as a scout and hunter, and he appears to have served his two periods of enlistment creditably. There is no evidence in the records that he hired someone else to complete the second period, as stated in the *Autobiography*, 83.

*** William Carroll succeeded Jackson as major general of the Tennessee militia. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 227.

and given command of the Seventh Military District. In this post he was to have the opportunity to gain further military renown, which was to pave the way for his later elevation to the presidency; and his Tennessee subordinates, such as Coffee and Carroll, were able to add to their military reputations. Space does not permit a discussion of Jackson's southern campaigns against the British. Suffice it to say that while successfully defending Mobile, he also was able to drive the British out of the Spanish East Florida port of Pensacola. Then he assumed command at New Orleans and repulsed the British effort to capture that city.¹² Although the Battle of New Orleans occurred after the treaty of peace had been signed,* ending the War of 1812, it greatly bolstered American morale and contributed to the rise of a spirit of nationalism. Also, Jackson became the one outstanding military hero of the war, a political advantage of immense proportions.

Jackson's popularity was increased further in 1818 by his invasion of Spanish East Florida, a region long desired by the United States. Jackson was instructed to chase the marauding Seminole Indians back into Spanish territory, if necessary; but he also took possession of the Spanish forts at St. Marks and Pensacola and seized and executed two British subjects who had been aiding the Indians. Jackson claimed that President Monroe had sent him additional instructions by Congressman John Rhea, which justified his highly irregular proceedings, but Monroe denied it. The whole matter became the subject of cabinet and congressional debate and investigation, and Jackson profited from the resulting publicity. Although seriously criticised in some quarters, he became in the public mind even more a national hero. This was particularly true since Secretary of State John Quincy Adams was able to use his campaign as a lever to force Spain to sell East Florida to the United States. After the Florida treaty eventually was ratified, in 1821, Jackson served for several months as governor of this acquired territory.¹³

Banking Problems and the Panic of 1819—An important aftermath of the War of 1812 in Tennessee and the West was a speculative boom followed by the Panic of 1819. These developments occurred during the three administrations

* In his report, *Battle of New Orleans: Its Real Meaning* (Nashville, 1935), as chairman of a committee created in 1827 to investigate that subject, Reau E. Folk points out that the Treaty of Ghent provided that hostilities were not to cease until ratifications were exchanged, and that the United States did not ratify until February 17, 1815. He argues convincingly that the British planned, if New Orleans were taken, to occupy the entire Louisiana Purchase and refuse to surrender it, even though the treaty provided for mutual restoration of all conquered territory. They claimed that the United States did not have legal possession of that region because of the allegedly fraudulent nature of the purchase. It is probable, however, that if the British actually had such a design, they would have abandoned it when the European war was resumed as a result of Napoleon's return from Elba in March, 1815.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

Lookout Mountain's Incline Railway, with Chattanooga in the distance

of Joseph McMinn,* a Hawkins Countian who defeated four Middle Tennesseans for the governorship in 1815 and was reelected in 1817 and 1819. Closely

* McMinn and Andrew Johnson were the only East Tennesseans elected governor from 1809 to the Civil War. Born in Pennsylvania in 1758, McMinn had come to Hawkins County in 1786. As mentioned above, he was a member of the territorial assembly and the constitutional convention. Later he served repeatedly in the state legislature and was speaker of the senate for three sessions. White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 442-43; William E. Beard, "Joseph McMinn: Tennessee's Fourth Governor," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IV (March, 1945), 154-66. Other aspects of his administration will be treated in other chapters.

related to the boom and the panic was the history of banking in the state. During the early years of the state's history there was little need for banks since the population was small and most trade was carried on by means of bartering one type of goods for another. With the acquisition of large tracts of land from the Indians (see Chapter XV), the growth of the state's population was phenomenal—from 105,602 in 1800 to 261,727 in 1810, to 422,823 in 1820. The consequent growth of trade and commerce necessitated the establishment of banks, and Tennessee's first banking institution, the Bank of Nashville, was established in 1807, soon after much of Middle Tennessee had been opened to white settlement by the Indian treaties of 1805 and 1806. The next bank, called the Bank of the State of Tennessee, was established in Knoxville in 1811. This was the first of several banks to bear the name of the state, and the state was a minority stockholder. Hugh Lawson White, the son of the founder of Knoxville and a judge on the state supreme court, was chosen president and he managed the bank with unusual wisdom. The federal government spent large sums of money in the state for supplies during the War of 1812 and contributed to the trend toward "wild cat" banking. Three more banks were chartered by the legislature in 1815, located in Fayetteville, Franklin, and Jonesboro.

By that year, however, all the banks in the state had followed the example of practically all other banks in the South and West and suspended specie payment.* The chartering of the Second Bank of the United States by Congress in 1816 placed some restraint on the "wild cat" tendencies of state banks, but its effectiveness in Tennessee was reduced by the fact that no branch of this national bank was established in the state until 1827. An effort was made by Felix Grundy, William Carroll, and others** to establish a branch in 1817, but the legislature passed a law subjecting any bank not chartered by the state to a special tax of \$50,000 a year. At the same session the legislature chartered state banks to be located in the small towns of Gallatin, Carthage, Rogersville, Kingston, Winchester, Columbia, Maryville, Shelbyville, and Murfreesboro, but they were permitted to become branches of either the Nashville or the Knoxville banks. This legislation was the result of a combination of the supporters of these two banks and the representatives from the small towns. Their spokesman was Judge White, president of the Knoxville bank, who was a member of that

* One of the functions of banks during this period was the issuance of paper money backed merely by the credit of the bank but redeemable on demand in specie (gold or silver coins). "Wild cat" banks neglected to keep adequate supplies of specie on hand and frequently were forced to suspend specie payment, and their notes consequently would depreciate in value.

** According to T. P. Abernethy, "Andrew Jackson and the Rise of Southwestern Democracy," *American Historical Review*, XXXIII (October, 1927), 66, Jackson was one of the group; but Charles G. Sellers, Jr. "Banking and Politics in Jackson's Tennessee, 1817-1827," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLI (June, 1954) 66 n., shows that he merely made recommendations for its officers and was actually opposed to its establishment.

legislature. He appears to have had in mind the building up of a strong state banking interest headed by his own bank, which would absorb the small banks and possibly merge with the Bank of Nashville. The boom times which followed the War of 1812 interfered with the achievement of this program, and the "wild cat" activities of 1817 "litter" of banks supplied the money for unhealthy business expansion and land speculation. The inevitable crash came in 1819 and was the beginning of a very serious economic depression. The Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Nashville, also chartered in 1817, was the first to suspend specie payment, but all the others soon followed suit, with the exception of White's bank in Knoxville.¹⁴

Prices fell rapidly, business enterprises failed, mortgages were foreclosed, and the oppressed debtors called on the legislature for help. That body responded with the so-called "Endorsement Act" of 1819, which postponed the execution of judgments for two years unless the creditor endorsed the judgment with an agreement to accept payment in the depreciated paper money which had been issued by the banks of the state. The leading sponsor of this "stay law" was Felix Grundy, a wealthy Nashvillian who seized upon the opportunity to build up a political following among the poor debtors. The chief opposition came from East Tennessee, where the depression was not so serious as it was in the middle division. In the older, more settled eastern area the boom had not reached the proportions it attained in the younger, cotton-growing area of Middle Tennessee, and consequently the fall was not so great. Although an East Tennessean, Governor McMinn yielded to the clamor of the debtors and called the legislature into special session in 1820. There he joined forces with Grundy in providing for additional relief, mainly by means of inflation of the currency. The plan was to establish loan offices in Nashville and Knoxville, with agencies in all of the counties, to lend at six per cent interest a maximum amount of one million dollars to the hard-pressed citizens of the state. The paper money issued for this purpose was to be backed by the proceeds from the sale of the state's public lands. Possibly with a view to obscuring the fact that the law was in obvious conflict with the provision of the United States Constitution prohibiting the issuance of paper money by a state, this combination of loan offices was officially named the Bank of the State of Tennessee,* and it was authorized to do a general banking business. The old banks opposed the legislation vigorously and were supported by Andrew Jackson, who sent a remonstrance to the legislature which aroused resentment by stating that any member who voted for the bill would be guilty of perjury. After the bill was passed the old banks succeeded in reducing its effectiveness by limiting their circulation of paper money in proportion to the amount issued by the loan offices.¹⁵

* Since this was also the official name of White's bank in Knoxville, chartered in 1811, confusion resulted. Thereafter White's bank was generally called the "Old State Bank" and Grundy's loan office the "New State Bank."

Consequently, the major issues in the state election of 1821 were money, banking, and relief for debtors. The opposing candidates for governor were William Carroll and Edward Ward. General Carroll came out of the war with a military reputation second only to that of Jackson, but was suspected of feeling that Old Hickory had managed to acquire for himself too much of the glory, at the expense of his subordinates. A native of Pennsylvania, Carroll was a Nashville merchant and the owner of the first steamboat to reach Nashville, in 1819. His business enterprises failed in the panic of that year; but that fact seems to have aided him in the campaign of 1821, for the poor debtors believed he would be able to sympathize with them in their difficulties. Ward was a conservative, wealthy planter and a neighbor and friend of Jackson, who supported him because of his opposition to the New State Bank.* Naturally, Ward was also supported by the old banks, but this seems to have handicapped him in the campaign for he was represented by his opponents as the candidate of the rich against the poor. Carroll won an overwhelming victory and went on to serve as chief executive for a longer period of time** than any other governor of Tennessee.

Actually, Carroll was opposed to inflation of the currency and advocated monetary stabilization. He induced the legislature to pass a law requiring the banks to resume specie payments by April, 1824.*** In 1823 Grundy, who had returned to the conservative camp, was able to get that date extended to 1826 with provision for gradual resumption. But even this legislation failed to save the banks. The Nashville Bank went out of business in 1826, and the Old State Bank wound up its affairs the next year, since President White had gone to the United States Senate. Grundy's New State Bank practically ceased to function; and after a legislative investigation in 1829 revealed a considerable amount of fraud in its management, it went out of business in 1831. Meanwhile, with the recovery from the depression and the increase in business activity, there was a new need for banking facilities. The legislature repealed the law of 1817 designed to prevent the establishment of any branch of the Second Bank of the United States, and a branch of that institution was established in Nashville in 1827. The war against that bank waged by Andrew Jackson after he became President in 1829 will be treated in another chapter.¹⁸

* Actually, Jackson was opposed to all banks and to all paper money issues, preferring currency of hard money only; and his appearance of conservatism in Tennessee politics was due to this fact, rather than to any lack of interest in the common people. Sellers, "Banking and Politics," 75-76. Cf. Abernethy, "Andrew Jackson," 64-67.

** Six full terms. The first of Sevier's six terms was abbreviated.

*** In the special session of 1822, however, the advocates of relief legislation were able to obtain the re-enactment with some modifications of the Endorsement Act, which had been declared unconstitutional by the state supreme court in 1821. Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 153.

CHAPTER XIV.—NOTES

1. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 217-19.
2. *Ibid.*, 219, 221-22; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, I, 79. For the development of interest in the short-cut to Mobile, see S. J. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845* (Knoxville, 1939), 35-40.
3. Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 41-42; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 220.
4. *Ibid.*, 220-21; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 42-61.
5. James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 153-59. Major Thomas Hart Benton kept a journal of this expedition, which was published in the Nashville *Clarion*. It is summarized in William N. Chambers, "Thwarted Warrior: The Last Years of Thomas Hart Benton in Tennessee, 1812-1815," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 22 (1950), 22-29.
6. Leota Driver Maiden, "Colonel John Williams," *ibid.*, No. 30 (1958), 13-18; S. C. Williams, "A Forgotten Campaign," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, VIII (January, 1925), 266-76. Both the Natchez and East Florida expeditions are described by Governor Willie Blount in his message to the legislature of September 20, 1813. White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 386-94.
7. *Ibid.*; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 166-81.
8. White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 397, 403; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 223-24. See also Mary Hardin McCown (ed.), "The 'J. Hartsell Memora': The Journal of a Tennessee Captain in the War of 1812," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 11 (1939), 93-115, No. 12 (1940), 118-46, for the journal of a captain of a Washington County company in Cocke's army.
9. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 224; James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 166-70.
10. *Ibid.*, 170-81; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, 99-108; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 224-27.
11. *Ibid.*, 227; James, *Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain*, 176-84.
12. These campaigns are well discussed in *ibid.*, 185-269.
13. *Ibid.*, 308-61; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, 233-321. Cf. R.R. Stenberg, "Jackson's 'Rhea Letter' Hoax," *Journal of Southern History*, II (November, 1936), 480-96.
14. Thomas P. Abernethy, "The Early Development of Commerce and Banking in Tennessee," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIV (December, 1927), 311-19; Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "Banking and Politics in Jackson's Tennessee, 1817-1827," *ibid.*, XLI (June, 1954), 61-66; Stephen B. Weeks, "Tennessee: A Discussion on the Sources of its Population and Lines of Immigration," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (December, 1916), 245-53; Claude A. Campbell, *The Development of Banking in Tennessee* (Nashville, 1932), 1-41; L. Paul Gresham, "Hugh Lawson White as a Tennessee Politician and Banker, 1807-1827," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 25-26, 30-39, 41-46.
15. Abernethy, "Commerce and Banking," 319-20; Sellers, "Banking and Politics," 66-71; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 103-12, 134-47; Campbell, *Development of Banking*, 43-49.
16. Abernethy, "Commerce and Banking," 320-25; Sellers, "Banking and Politics," 71-84; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 149-55; White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 1-16, 45-53, 84-87, 261-76; Campbell, *Development of Banking*, 49-62.

CHAPTER XV

Indian Removal and Public Lands

FEW TOPICS IN TENNESSEE history are as complex as the intertwined question of Indians and public lands. As described in an earlier chapter (VIII), North Carolina claimed at the end of the Revolutionary War that the Indians had forfeited their title to land in the Tennessee country by their adherence to the British cause. Consequently, in 1782-1783, after reserving for the "use" of the Cherokee the region south of the French Broad River and east of the Tennessee, she opened all the remainder of what is now Tennessee to entry by soldiers and land speculators. The United States government, however, continued to recognize the Indian title and insisted that the holders of North Carolina land warrants could not occupy the lands granted until the Indians had voluntarily ceded them to the United States. When Tennessee entered the Union, approximately three-fourths of the area of the state was still claimed by the Cherokee and Chickasaw Indians; but outside the "Cherokee Reservation," most of it was blanketed with land warrants issued by North Carolina. Consequently, the United States was under continuous and heavy pressure from thousands of land claimants and prospective settlers to clear Tennessee land of the Indian title as quickly as possible.

Indian Cessions, 1798-1819—As previously mentioned,* a serious problem arose when federal troops began to remove by force many settlers who were found to be on the Indian side of the Holston Treaty line as marked by Benjamin Hawkins in 1797. One family removed was that of the prominent territorial and state judge, David Campbell. Outraged by this action, the Tennessee legislature sent a vigorous remonstrance to Congress, which was seconded by a personal protest from Governor Sevier. Included in the remonstrance was a demand that all of Tennessee should be cleared of the Indian title so that holders of North Carolina warrants could make use of their grants. The government responded with the appointment of commissioners who succeeded, with the aid of Governor Sevier and a Tennessee commissioner, General James White, in inducing the Cherokee to cede most of the territory already occupied by the whites. Included were two tracts, one between the Hawkins line and the Tennessee

* See Chapter XIII.

and Little Tennessee rivers, and the other, between the Clinch River and the Cumberland Mountains.* This "First Treaty of Tellico" was signed at Tellico Blockhouse, October 2, 1798.¹

Tennesseans were disappointed by the smallness of the cession and continued to exert pressure on the government to acquire more land. In 1805-1806 the new agent to the Cherokee, Return Jonathan Meigs, appointed by Jefferson in 1801, succeeded in obtaining a series of important cessions. He and his co-commissioner, Daniel Smith, found it necessary, however, to resort to the shameful practice of bribing individual chiefs. By the Third Treaty of Tellico, October 25, 1805, the Indians ceded all their claims north of the Duck River and of a line from its source to the mouth of the Hiwassee.** By secret articles there were reserved for the "particular disposal of the United States," but actually for Doublehead and other Cherokee chiefs, several tracts of land which were given to them as compensation for their influence. A somewhat different strategy was used to obtain the valuable land at the mouth of the Clinch on which the federal garrison at Southwest Point (Kingston) was located. The Indians were told that this place would be a convenient one for the meeting of the general assembly of Tennessee, and the legislature collaborated by providing at the close of the 1805 session that the assembly would next meet at Southwest Point. By the Fourth Treaty of Tellico, October 27, 1805, the land was duly ceded, for \$1,600, and the legislature kept the technicalities of the bargain by meeting at Kingston on one day, September 21, 1807; it then moved the capital back to Knoxville. Meanwhile, by Dearborn's Treaty of January 7, 1806, the Cherokee ceded for \$10,000 another large tract of their hunting grounds, between the Duck River and the Tennessee, thus clearing most of the remainder of Middle Tennessee for settlement. The negotiations had been shifted to Washington to escape the prying eyes of the Cherokee, who were becoming aware of the perfidy of their leaders. Doublehead, however, did not escape punishment, as he was assassinated in 1807. Meanwhile, the conflicting claims of the Chickasaw to a considerable portion of the Cherokee cessions of 1805-1806 had been extinguished by a treaty of July 23, 1805, negotiated by John McKee and John Forbes. The Chickasaw Nation received \$20,000 and two chiefs \$1,000 each for "unspecified services."²

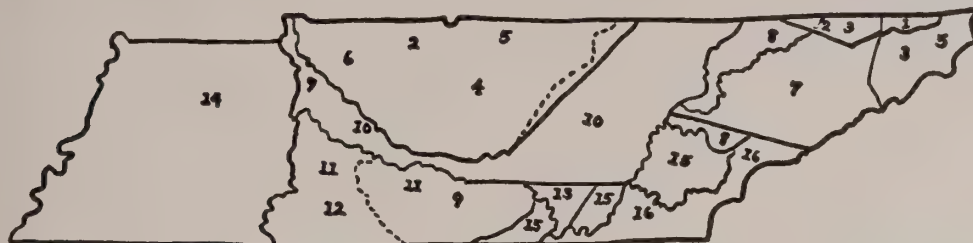
As a result of these Indian cessions, migration to Tennessee increased enormously. Between 1800 and 1810 the free white population increased 137 per cent and the slave population 238 per cent. Also, many new counties were created to take care of the expansion of settlement. In the first eleven years after admission the number of counties in East Tennessee increased from eight to seventeen; five of the nine new counties were established to include lands

* For the cession the Cherokee received \$5,000 and an annuity of \$1,000.

** The compensation was \$14,000 and an annuity of \$3,000.

ceded by the Cherokee since 1796. The growth of Middle Tennessee was even greater, from three counties in 1796 to twenty in 1809.*³

Meanwhile, Tennesseans had become greatly interested in the policy of Indian removal suggested by President Jefferson at the time of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. This idea was that the Indians residing east of the Mississippi



(Drawn by S. J. Folmsbee and M. Montgomery. Source: Royce, "Indian Land Cessions.")

Cherokee and Chickasaw Cessions of Land in Tennessee

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Treaty of Lochaber, 1770-1771 | 9. Chickasaw Cession, 1805 |
| 2. Transylvania Purchase, 1775 | 10. Third Treaty of Tellico, 1805 |
| 3. Avery and Christian Treaties, 1777 | 11. Dearborn Treaty, 1806 |
| 4. Nashborough Treaty (Chickasaw), 1783 | 12. Chickasaw Cession, 1816 |
| 5. Treaty of Hopewell, 1785 | 13. Jackson and McMinn Treaty, 1817 |
| 6. Treaty of Hopewell (Chickasaw), 1786 | 14. Jackson Purchase (Chickasaw), 1818 |
| 7. Treaty of the Holston, 1791 | 15. Calhoun's Treaty, 1819 |
| 8. First Treaty of Tellico, 1798 | 16. Treaty of Removal, 1835 |

River should be induced to give up their lands and accept in exchange an equivalent number of acres in the Louisiana Purchase. In 1808 Agent Meigs was instructed to spread the removal idea among the Cherokee, and he was so persuasive that about two thousand expressed a desire to leave. Congress had had not appropriated enough money to pay the expenses of so large a number, and Meigs was instructed to undo much of his good work and encourage only individual families to remove. During the next few years quite a few families, mainly of the Upper Cherokee living in Tennessee, did move west, but since no land had been set aside for them, they settled on whatever land they could find available. They soon became involved in difficulties with their neighbors, and it was these difficulties which paved the way in 1817 for the next important cession by the Cherokee of land in Tennessee. After the War of 1812 federal interest in Indian removal was revived, largely due to the influence General

* The new counties in East Tennessee were: Carter and Grainger (1796), Cocke (1797), Claiborne, Roane and Anderson (1801), Campbell (1806), Rhea and Bledsoe (1807); in Middle Tennessee: Montgomery and Robertson, replacing Tennessee (1796), Smith and Wilson (1799), Jackson (1801), Dickson, Rutherford and Stewart (1803), Overton and White (1806), Maury, Bedford, Hickman and Franklin (1807), Humphreys, Giles, Lincoln, and Warren (1809).

Andrew Jackson* was able to exert over the national administration. Without any apparent justification, Old Hickory informed the secretary of war in October, 1816, that he believed the Cherokee would be willing to exchange all of their lands east of the Mississippi for land in the West, and he was appointed a commissioner, along with Governor Joseph McMinn of Tennessee and General David Meriwether, to negotiate with them. Included in the conference was a delegation from the Cherokee already in the West, who had been told that they could not be given any assignment of land until an equivalent acreage east of the Mississippi had been ceded. With great difficulty, but with the aid of strategically-placed bribes, the commissioners were able to conclude such an arrangement on July 8, 1817, by which a large tract of land was set aside for the Cherokee on the Arkansas and White rivers in exchange for a cession of land in Georgia and the Sequatchie Valley in Tennessee. Other provisions of this "Jackson and McMinn Treaty" included the offer of a square mile of land to any Indian who wished to remain in the East and become an American citizen, a provision for the taking of a census of the Cherokee Nation, and the assurance that the United States would pay the expenses of removal for any Indians who wished to migrate to the West. Only a minority of the chiefs signed, but despite a vigorous protest from the majority, the Senate ratified the treaty.⁴

Governor McMinn of Tennessee was appointed as a federal agent to arrange for the general removal of the Cherokee, but that nation as a whole continued to reject all proposals, including an offer of \$200,000 for all their lands in the East. Most opposed to removal were the mixed-bloods and others who had adopted much of the white man's civilization. They did not wish to abandon the considerable amounts of property they had acquired and revert to their former primitive ways of living. A typical reaction, as reported by a group of missionaries, was as follows:

* Even before the war ended he had made a start in that direction by forcing the Creek Indians, following the Battle of Tohopeka, to cede a large part of their lands, including some territory claimed by the Cherokee. When the government held up the execution of the treaty because of the Cherokee claim, Jackson was highly indignant, but he was appeased by appointment as a commissioner to negotiate with the Cherokee, who were finally induced to cede the land, September 14, 1816, for \$5,000 and a ten year annuity of \$6,000. At the same conference, which was held in the Chickasaw country, the Chickasaw were induced with the aid of bribes to cede some land north of the Tennessee River, including the southwestern corner of Middle Tennessee to which the Cherokee title had been extinguished in 1806. The Chickasaw received \$4,500 and an annuity of \$12,000 for ten years. The counties of Lawrence and Wayne, in 1817, and Perry, in 1819, were created in that area. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 191-201; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 248; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 209-11; Myers, "Tennessee's Policy," 41-47.

The Indians say they don't know how to understand their Father the President. A few years ago he sent them a plough & a hoe—said it was not good for his red children to hunt—they must cultivate the earth. Now he tells them there is good hunting at the Arkansas, if they go there he will give them rifles.⁵

Less unwilling to move were the uncivilized Indians of the hilly country, and despite the tribal policy of persecuting those who enrolled for removal, McMinn was able to induce about 3,500 to go west. The Cherokee council sent a delegation to Washington to protest against the pressure for removal, but Secretary of War Calhoun countered with a demand that the Indians make another large cession of land to compensate for the additional territory which would have to be set aside for the Cherokee who had already moved or were about to move west. The delegation at length agreed, and in Calhoun's Treaty of February 27, 1819, ceded three tracts of land. Included was the remainder of the Cherokee claim north of the Tennessee River. Two sections of this area lay in Tennessee, on either side of the Sequatchie Valley cession of 1817. Also ceded was the Hiwassee District, which included a large tract between the Hiwassee and Little Tennessee and a smaller tract north of the latter river. Several islands and small areas reserved by the Indians from previous cessions were also ceded. The provision of 1817 offering individual Indians citizenship and a square mile of land was renewed.* Following this treaty, McMinn was instructed to cease his removal activity, since the land in the West to be occupied by the removing Indians had already been paid for. Thus, by the 1819 treaty the Cherokee had purchased a decade of peace. For the areas cleared of the Cherokee title in 1817 and 1819, Marion, Hamilton, McMinn, and Monroe counties were created and Franklin County was enlarged. Hamilton, however, did not include any territory south and east of the Tennessee River.⁶

Meanwhile, the last claims of the Chickasaw had been extinguished. Mention has been made of their relinquishment in 1805 and 1816 of their conflicting claims with the Cherokee east of the northward-flowing Tennessee River. In 1818 Andrew Jackson and former Governor Isaac Shelby of Kentucky were appointed as commissioners to negotiate for West Tennessee and the western part of Kentucky. The land in those areas, they told the Indians, had been given by North Carolina and Virginia to Revolutionary War soldiers thirty-five years before, and the United States could not guarantee any longer to keep settlers out of the region. Even so, it was necessary to distribute more than \$20,000 in bribes among several Chickasaw chiefs and increase the purchase

* This provision was destined to cause serious complications in the future. For example, an Indian named Path Killer was given a grant at Blair's Ferry (Loudon) which resulted in a great amount of litigation. Arthur M. Fowler, "Early History of Loudon, Tennessee" (MS in Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville).

price to \$300,000* before the treaty could be concluded, on October 19, 1818.⁷

Following the acquisition of this "Jackson Purchase," West Tennessee, or the Western District, as it was known for several years, received a large migration from the other parts of Tennessee and from neighboring states. It probably would have been settled even more rapidly had it not been for the economic depression** which began in 1819. In November of that year the legislature created two new counties, Hardin and Humphreys, which were partly in Middle Tennessee but whose boundaries extended across the Tennessee River, and one county, Shelby, entirely in the Western District. The existence of Shelby, named for Jackson's co-commissioner in the Chickasaw negotiation, was due to the fact that the three individuals who had acquired title to most of the land at the lower Chickasaw Bluff, Judge John Overton and Generals James Winchester and Andrew Jackson, were engaged in establishing the town of Memphis. Since the evacuation of Fort San Fernando by the Spaniards in 1797, Americans had used the bluff as a site for a trading post and a fort,*** and it had only a handful of settlers. But following the Chickasaw treaty Jackson was able to turn a neat profit in disposing of what he had left of his land interests at the site of Memphis. He sold to General Winchester for \$5,000 an interest which originally had cost him only \$25.00. A few years later he disposed of the remainder of his holdings to John C. McLemore at a good profit. In 1820 the proprietors advertised Memphis in a glowing prospectus which was printed in newspapers throughout the country. As proof that it was "destined to become a populous city," it was proclaimed as "the only site for a town of any magnitude on the Mississippi between the mouth of the Ohio and Natchez." Nevertheless, growth of the town was slow. From 53 inhabitants in 1820, its population grew to only 663 in 1830; and for the next few years it had a serious rival on the Mississippi—Randolph, at the mouth of the Hatchie River. Until after 1830 the largest population in the Western District was in its eastern section. At that date there were fourteen counties in the District, in addition to the western parts of Hardin, Humphreys, and Perry. Five of them—Henry, Madison, Hardeman, Carroll, and Henderson, all in the east—had populations of more than 8,000, and Shelby's population of 5,652 was also exceeded by Fayette and McNairy, along the southern edge of the District, and Gibson, located north of Madison.**** The plantation type of agriculture is

* This amount was to be paid in fifteen annual installments of \$20,000 each.

** Williams, *West Tennessee*, 116-18, contends that the depression accelerated settlement, especially from North Carolina, but then describes the migration as becoming very heavy about 1824-1825.

*** Fort Pickering, built about 1798 some distance below the site of San Fernando as a successor to Fort Adams (re-named Fort Pike), which had been built on the ruins of the Spanish fort after the evacuation. Williams, *West Tennessee*, 58-60.

**** The other counties in the District in 1830 were Dyer, Haywood, Obion, Tipton, and Weakley.

indicated by the total slave population of the fourteen District counties of 26,161.⁸

Tennessee and the Removal of the Cherokee—As a result of the treaties of 1798-1819 all of Tennessee had been cleared of the Indian title except the southeastern corner of the state, which was still held by the Cherokee. Sixteen years were to pass before those Indians could be induced to surrender that territory, along with their extensive holdings in neighboring Georgia and smaller tracts in North Carolina and Alabama. By the previous treaties the Cherokee had been pushed almost completely out of Tennessee into Georgia, and Tennesseans were content to let the people of that state take the lead in bringing about the complete removal of the Cherokee to the West; but they gave the Georgians valuable moral support.

The stubbornness with which the Cherokee resisted the federal removal policy was due to the great progress in civilization which they had made, which was much greater than that of other Southern tribes. They had given up hunting and were engaged in agriculture—growing cotton, tobacco, corn, and other crops. There was also a considerable amount of domestic manufacturing.* Practically all of the mixed-bloods could speak English and many could read and write, as could also a considerable number of the full-blooded Cherokee. After the great Sequoyah (George Guess or Gist) in the 1820's had invented his syllabary, which made possible the writing and printing of the Cherokee language, a large number of the Nation learned to read and write in their native tongue, which was many times easier than learning English. It is probable that there was less illiteracy among the Cherokee than among the whites living in the same states. A printing press was obtained and a newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*, was published from 1828 to 1832 in the two languages, English and Cherokee. As early as 1817 the Nation had set up a republican form of government, with elections in the several districts of representatives to a general council. In 1827 they had adopted a constitution modeled after that of the United States and hoped for admission into the Union as a state. It was this constitution, however, with its emphasis upon "sovereignty," which was to lead to their ultimate downfall. The "sovereign" states in which they lived were not going to tolerate another sovereignty within their limits, and the United States Constitution which they copied included a guarantee that no state can be divided without its consent.⁹

* According to an official census begun by the Indian government in 1824 and published in 1828, the total population was about 15,000. They owned about 1,000 slaves, 22,400 cattle, 7,600 horses, 40,000 swine, 3,000 sheep, 1,850 spinning wheels, 2,450 plows, 547 "wheels," 475 goats, 700 looms, and 120 wagons. There were 12 saw mills, 55 blacksmith shops, 6 cotton gins, 10 ferries, 9 stores, a turnpike, 6 public roads, and a threshing machine. The aggregate value of their property was estimated at \$2,200,000. Malone, *Cherokees*, 137, citing *Cherokee Phoenix*, May 14, June 11, 1828.

For the rapid progress of the Cherokee in civilization there were two main causes. One was the policy of the United States government of supplying seeds and farm implements and also some training in agriculture; the other was the work of Christian missionaries. As indicated in an earlier chapter (X), the former seems to have originated in provision of the Holston Treaty of 1791 stating that the United States would supply the Nation with "useful implements of husbandry." The policy of transforming the Indians from hunters into herdsmen and cultivators was carried into effect with great earnestness by Benjamin Hawkins and Return J. Meigs.¹⁰

Attempts to Christianize the Cherokee were made during the colonial period by the Moravians (later called United Brethren) and the Presbyterians, but without much success. Both denominations renewed their activity after 1800; and discovering that the Indians were more interested in education than in changing their religion, they adopted the practice of founding mission schools. The Moravians started one at Spring Place, in northern Georgia, in 1801 and another about fifteen miles distant in 1821, and they continued to dispense secular and religious education until 1832. The Presbyterians under the leadership of the Reverend Gideon Blackburn started a school on the Hiwassee River in 1804 and another at the mouth of Sale Creek on the Tennessee two years later. Although Blackburn was forced by ill health to close his schools in 1810, it was reported that between four and five hundred young Cherokee had learned to read and write through his efforts, and some had become exemplary Christians.

Later activities of the Presbyterians were conducted through the inter-denominational American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was largely Congregational-Presbyterian at the time of its organization in 1810, but which included some Dutch Reformed church elements at a later date. In 1816 the Board sent Cyrus Kingsbury to survey the Cherokee country, and with the encouragement of the United States government he established early the next year a mission school on Chickamauga Creek near the present Chattanooga. This Brainerd Mission, as it was named a year later, became the most noted and successful mission school in the Cherokee country. It also established several branch missions elsewhere in the Nation, including Candy's Creek and Amohee in East Tennessee. Several of the most intelligent of the Brainerd students continued their studies at the more advanced mission school operated by the American Board at Cornwall, Connecticut. Two young men of the group, however, Elias Boudinot and John Ridge, fell in love with white girls of the community and despite public opposition eventually married them.*

* Boudinot, who later became editor of the *Cherokee Phoenix*, married Harriet Gold. John, the son of Major Ridge, the leader of the Ridge faction which put across the removal treaty, married Sarah Northrup. The two young ladies apparently had little difficulty in adjusting to the Indian environment.

Although it had been quite customary for white men to marry Indian girls, the reverse of that situation created such a furor that the Cornwall school was closed in 1826. Meanwhile, the Brainerd Mission had come under the leadership of the capable and highly educated Samuel Austin Worcester, whose name was to become a familiar one in history textbooks because of his connection with a celebrated Supreme Court case.* He arrived at the time when large numbers of the Cherokee, taking advantage of Sequoyah's invention, were learning to read and write their own language. He played a leading role in helping the Nation acquire a printing press and publish a newspaper, and was instrumental in having the Bible and other types of religious literature translated by the superior products of the mission schools into Cherokee and distributed throughout the Nation. Those materials and the printing of news about religious activities in the *Cherokee Phoenix* greatly facilitated the work of the missionaries. In recognition of these services, the Indians called Worcester "The Messenger."

Two other Protestant denominations, the Baptists and the Methodists, also sent missionaries to the Cherokee. Under the leadership of the Reverend Humphrey Posey, the Baptists, beginning in 1817, established schools in the North Carolina and Georgia sections of the Nation and also among the Indians who had moved west. William McKendree, bishop of the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church, became interested in Cherokee missions in 1822 and assigned the Reverend Richard Neely to a circuit in the eastern Alabama region. In addition to the missions in that area, the Methodists established others at Ross' Post Office near Chattanooga (where John Ross was among those converted), and at New Echota in Georgia. The camp meetings, personal evangelizing, and dramatic exhortations of the Methodists were quite effective but aroused some opposition among the other denominations. The Methodists also made considerable use of lay workers among the Indians, one of whom, Turtle Fields, became a regular minister; and at the suggestion of Bishop McKendree they emphasized, as did also some of the other denominations, training in agriculture and "house-wifery."¹¹

Among the influences contributing to the refusal** of the Cherokee to move west was the encouragement of most of the missionaries, although near the end of the controversy, many of them came to the conclusion that the combination of Jackson and Georgia was too strong to resist and advised yielding to the inevitable. Georgia's insistence on Indian removal was based on the fact that the United States government in 1802, when it accepted the state's cession

* *Worcester v. Georgia*, which will be discussed later.

** Following the death of R. J. Meigs in January, 1823, ex-Governor Joseph McMinn of Tennessee became agent to the Cherokee, but in his efforts to induce them to remove he succeeded only in making himself even more obnoxious than formerly to the Indians. Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 216-17.

of its western claim to much of Alabama and Mississippi, had promised that the land left in Georgia's possession would be cleared of the Indian title as quickly as it could be done by peaceful means. When the Cherokee indicated their intent to remain in Georgia permanently and expressed their desire to be admitted into the Union, Georgia officials became insistent that the word "peaceful" be ignored. Soon thereafter the discovery of gold in the Cherokee country and the resulting gold rush increased the Georgians' desire for possession, and those who failed to find gold looked with hungry eyes upon the well developed farms of the Indians. After engaging in a bitter controversy with President John Quincy Adams, Georgia had coerced his administration into acquiring most of the Creek lands in the state. After the election of President Jackson, Georgia looked forward with confidence that this old Indian-fighter would help rather than hinder their efforts to expel the Cherokee from these Eastern holdings. To strengthen the President's hand, the Georgia legislature passed an act in December, 1828, extending the jurisdiction of the state over the Indian country, to go into effect in June, 1830.

The Georgians' faith in Jackson was not misplaced. In his first message to Congress, in 1829, the President strongly urged removal even though his secret agent, General William Carroll of Tennessee, who had been sent to the Creeks and Cherokee to encourage that policy, had failed completely in his mission. When a Cherokee delegation came to Washington to protest against Georgia's legislation, it was told that the federal government had no authority to interfere and that the Indians would have to submit to Georgia's jurisdiction or move west. Dissatisfied with the piecemeal removal policy which had been followed in the past, Jackson asked Congress for a general removal law which would give him more express authority. Such a measure, which also appropriated \$500,000 for removal purposes, was passed in May, 1830, with Hugh Lawson White of Knoxville acting as its chief sponsor in the Senate and John Bell* of Nashville assuming a similar role in the House. Every member from Tennessee in the two houses voted for the bill except David Crockett. Whether the West Tennessee Representative also spoke against the bill is uncertain. The published *Register of Debates* contains no reference to it, but a sketch of his alleged "Remarks" on the bill was published in pamphlet form and in the Jackson, Tennessee, *Gazette*. His chief objection to the bill was that it gave the President half a million dollars to use without congressional control. He would never vote, he said, to drive his neighbors, the Chickasaw, west of the Mississippi, and he knew many Cherokee would prefer to die in their homes rather than move west. He also wished some guarantee that the government would protect the Cherokee from the unconstitutional exercise of Georgia's

* Bell claimed, as did Jackson, that only the wealthy half-breeds opposed removal and that the majority, the purebloods, would be better off in the West; but he did not neglect to speculate in the lands they ceded. Parks, *John Bell*, 37-42.

jurisdiction over their country. He admitted that he did not know a man within five hundred miles of his home who would agree with him, and it is probable that the publication of his "Remarks" in a paper in his home district was the chief cause of his defeat in the next election.¹²

Tennesseans watched with interest the efforts of the Cherokee to have the Georgia jurisdiction law declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. In the first case, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, the judges, although sympathetic with the Indians, declared that the Indians had no status which would entitle them to bring suit in a United States court. Later, after a group of white missionaries had been arrested for refusal to take an oath of allegiance to the state of Georgia, two of them, S. A. Worcester and Elizur Butler, continued their defiance and were sentenced to prison. When the case reached the United States Supreme Court on appeal in 1832, the Court declared the Georgia law under which they were convicted to be unconstitutional. The Indians' joy, however, was short lived, for Jackson refused to enforce the decision, withdrew federal troops from Georgia, and allowed that state to enforce the unconstitutional law* and other oppressive legislation designed to force the Cherokee to move. Georgia surveyed the Cherokee lands and disposed of them by means of a lottery; provided that no Indian could bring suit or testify in a Georgia court; and prohibited the Indians from holding any assemblies. The Cherokee were forced to move their capital and the meetings of the council to Red Clay, across the state line in Tennessee, and many missionaries and Indians as well sought refuge in this state.** Consequently, Georgia increased the pressure on Tennessee to follow her example and extend state jurisdiction over the Indian country. The Tennessee legislature, after three previous failures to enact such legislation, at length complied, following Governor Carroll's recommendation, on November 8, 1833.*** The Tennessee act, however, was not as extreme as the laws of Georgia. The Indians were to be protected in their property rights and exempted from taxation and military service, except that those who had taken reservations and become citizens of the United States were made subject to all the laws of Tennessee. The state courts were to have criminal jurisdiction in the Indian country only in cases involving murder, rape, and larceny.¹³

* Worcester and Butler eventually agreed to accept pardons from the governor and were released.

** Georgia, however, did not respect the state boundary. In 1835 Chief John Ross and his visitor, the celebrated author-composer John Howard Payne, were arrested at Red Clay. Payne wrote bitter denunciations of the Georgia policy and a wave of indignation swept over Tennessee. Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 258-64.

*** The house committee, in recommending the legislation, criticised at length John Marshall's opinion in *Worcester v. Georgia*, and contended that the Cherokee Nation had become a "sanctuary of vice and crime," where a few half-breed chiefs dominated the government for their own personal interest. *House Journal*, 1833, pp. 40-45.

An interesting court case arose as a result of the Tennessee law. In 1835 a Cherokee named James Foreman was indicted in McMinn County for the murder of another Indian, John Walker. The contention of the defense that the state law was unconstitutional and that the state court had no jurisdiction was upheld in the circuit court and the prisoner ordered discharged, but on appeal the decision was reversed by the state supreme court. Judge John Catron, in delivering the court's opinion, stated unjustifiably that the Indians were "mere wandering tribes of savages" and might even "deserve to be exterminated as savage and pernicious beasts."* The title of the whites was based upon the right of conquest, and the state's jurisdiction over the Indians upon the right of "self-preservation." He contended that no treaty or act of Congress could deprive a state of its undelegated sovereignty. Ignoring the clause in the Constitution giving the federal government control of Indian affairs, he insisted that the government's power was based upon the interstate commerce clause and limited to actual commerce. Assuming that the decision would be appealed, Catron repeated his arguments in a letter to Governor Newton Cannon, who submitted it to the legislature. The case actually was set for trial by the United States Supreme Court in January, 1836, but by that time a minority faction of the Cherokee had signed a treaty of removal, and it seems that the case never was tried. Catron's views were very similar to those of Jackson, and it is of interest to note that Old Hickory appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1837.¹⁴

The signing of a removal treaty by a minority faction of the Cherokee was due to the growing conviction of Elias Boudinot and John Ridge, especially after Jackson had been elected to a second term in 1832, that the only intelligent course for the Nation to follow would be to get the best terms possible from the government and move west. The only alternative would be acceptance of the intolerable jurisdiction of Georgia and the loss of independence as a nation. They succeeded in converting the elder chieftain, John's father, "Major" Ridge, to their viewpoint, and he became the leader of the faction. The beloved principal chief, John Ross, however, retained the support of the overwhelming majority of his anti-removal policy, in the vain hope that Northern and Whig pressure would force the Jackson administration to abide by the existing treaties with the Nation. Consequently, the Ridge faction decided to ignore the Cherokee constitution and act independently in negotiating a

* He cited as support a dissenting opinion in 1826 of John Haywood from his own presentation of the court's decision in the case of *Cornet v. Winston's Lessee* (10 Tenn. 143), in which Catron and the majority had declared that the "earlier notions of the Spaniards and others 'that the Indians were mere savage beasts without rights of any kind,' have long since been exploded." Catron's views had changed remarkably in nine years. His desire to please Jackson may have been the cause.

treaty which they believed would be to the best interests of the Cherokee people, even though by that course they were endangering their own lives. Cherokee law provided the death penalty for such action. Major Ridge, the first to sign the document, commented prophetically as he did so that he was signing his death warrant.* The Ross faction made the mistake of boycotting the assembly of December 23, 1835, called by the government agent, John F. Schermerhorn, at which, on December 29, the signing occurred. Of the three hundred who signed only seventy-nine were legal voters. Ross had departed for Washington at the head of a delegation which hoped to negotiate a more satisfactory and legal treaty. But when Schermerhorn and the Ridge faction leaders arrived with their Treaty of New Echota, Jackson ignored the Ross group, accepted the irregular treaty, and submitted it to the Senate. Although the evidence was overwhelming that the treaty was opposed and repudiated by all but a small group of the Cherokee Nation, it was ratified by the Senate on May 23, 1836. By this treaty the Cherokee ceded all their lands east of the Mississippi for \$5,000,000 and agreed to move west within two years. When the time expired in 1838, only a small number of the Cherokee had removed, and the United States army under General Winfield S. Scott ejected the remainder by force, thousands dying on the way. The story of that horrible "Trail of Tears" is too familiar to need repetition here. Many Tennesseans were involved in the removal, most of the camps in which the Indians were concentrated were in Tennessee, and the overland route followed by the latest migrants, under the supervision of John Ross, went by way of Nashville, passing near the home of the retired President who had been responsible for their expulsion from their own homes.**15

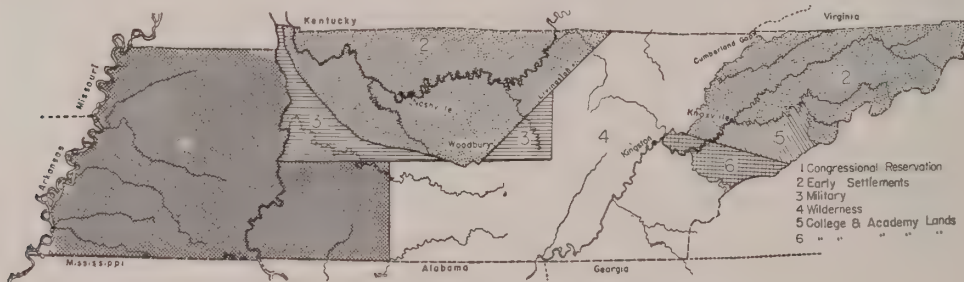
The Tennessee territory ceded by the Treaty of New Echota was the

* After the removal in 1838 the Cherokee council, without John Ross' knowledge, executed this death penalty on Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Boudinot. The Ridges and others of the removal faction had been paid what some writers consider excessive amounts—the equivalent of bribes—for their property holdings. John P. Brown, "Cherokee Removal, An Unnecessary Tragedy," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 11 (1939), 17.

** Jackson from the Hermitage protested bitterly against allowing Ross to superintend the final migration. Jackson to Attorney General Felix Grundy, August 23, 1838, quoted in Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 511-12. Many of the Indians escaped removal by hiding out in the Great Smoky Mountains and were aided by a friendly North Carolinian, Will Thomas, in obtaining possession of the present Qualla Reservation at Cherokee, North Carolina. According to tradition, the army's efforts to get the Indians out of the mountains ceased as a result of the voluntary surrender of an Indian named Tsali, who had killed some soldiers for mistreating his wife in the removal operation. *Ibid.*, 520-23. Tsali and others of his family involved were executed, and the army did cease its efforts to round up the Indians, but the connection between the two has never been confirmed. This story is the climax of the drama, "Unto These Hills," given each summer at Cherokee.

region south of the Hiwassee River and east of the Tennessee, together with a strip along the North Carolina border between the Hiwassee and the Little Tennessee. To include this land two new counties—Bradley and Polk—were created and Monroe and Hamilton received large accessions of territory. Ross' Landing, soon to be named Chattanooga, already was in 1838 an important shipping point and the expected terminus of a railroad. In that year F. A. Parham began the publication of the *Hamilton Gazette*. Lots in the town were sold at auction in 1839, and in December of that year the town was incorporated. In advertising the sale of lots the commissioners predicted that Chattanooga would become "not only an extensive produce market," but a great depot for exports and imports. And casting an eye in the direction of Lookout and Signal mountains, they pointed out that the town offered "a genial and salubrious climate in a situation surrounded by scenery the most grand and picturesque."¹⁶

Public Land Policy—When Tennessee entered the Union in 1796, she became involved in a triangular dispute with North Carolina and the United States over title to land in the state. North Carolina claimed on the basis of her cession act of 1789 that holders of land warrants under her acts of 1780-1783 were entitled to obtain possession of the lands involved as soon as the Indian title should be extinguished. She also insisted that her Revolutionary War soldiers, even if they had not obtained their warrants, still were entitled to the number of acres allowed them, which varied according to rank, under her military bounty laws. And if there should not be sufficient good land available in the



(After Garrett & Goodpasture)

(From "The Story of Tennessee," by Parks & Folmsbee, Harlow Pub. Co., Okla. City, Okla.)

Public Lands and Government Reservations 1806

1. Ceded to the Federal Government in the Compact of 1806. Known as Congressional Reservation.
2. The Early Watauga and Cumberland settlements, subject to settlers' preemption rights.
3. The Military Reservation for officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary War. It overlaps 2.
4. The wilderness, as yet unappropriated.
5. and 6. College and academy lands.

Military Reservation in Middle Tennessee, which had been set aside for them, they had the right to locate their lands elsewhere in the state, except in the "Cherokee Reservation"—south of the French Broad River and east of the Tennessee. The United States claimed title to any land which remained after all of North Carolina's claims had been satisfied. Tennessee argued, however, that since no mention had been made of the North Carolina or United States claims in the act admitting the state into the Union, those claims had been forfeited and Tennessee was the owner of all unappropriated lands within her borders. She even threatened to set up her own land offices and refuse to recognize any further grants by the mother state. After a bitter controversy, the three-cornered dispute was eventually resolved by a compromise, known as the Compact of 1806, enacted by Congress in that year.

By this agreement Tennessee recognized the title of the United States to all ungranted lands in an area which became known as the Congressional Reservation. It included all of West Tennessee and the southwestern corner of Middle Tennessee. The United States surrendered to Tennessee all claims to land north and east of the Congressional Reservation boundary, subject to the following conditions: (1) Tennessee should satisfy all future North Carolina grants in that portion of the state, exclusive of the Cherokee Reservation; (2) where existing claims permitted, Tennessee was to reserve for the use of schools forever a section of 640 acres out of every township six miles square (36 square miles); (3) Tennessee was to appropriate two 100,000 acre tracts of land in the Cherokee Reservation, one of which was to be for the support of two colleges, one in East and the other in Middle Tennessee, and the other tract for the support of an academy in each county; and (4) Tennessee was not to sell land within those tracts for less than \$2.00 an acre or sell land anywhere in the ceded territory for less than the national minimum* price, except that occupants in the Cherokee Reservation might be permitted to purchase their holdings, to the extent of 640 acres, at \$1.00 an acre.¹⁷

In his message to the legislature recommending legislation to put the Compact into effect, Governor Sevier declared hopefully that the revenue which would come from the sale of lands relinquished to the state would make unnecessary the imposing of any additional burdens of taxation on the people. He was unduly optimistic, apparently underestimating the extent of the North Carolina claims and the ability of that state to increase their number. For many years Tennessee served mainly as an administrator of North Carolina land warrants entitling the owners to land in the state as soon as the Indian title was extinguished. As mentioned above, it was the existence of these land claims which led Tennesseans to be so insistent upon the rapid removal of the Indian title. In 1806, shortly after most of lower Middle Tennessee had been

* The national minimum price in 1806 was \$2.00 an acre, but it was reduced to \$1.25 in 1820.

opened to settlement, the legislature provided for the survey of land cleared of the Indian title into townships, for the recognition of North Carolina warrants, and for the reservation of school lands, where possible. Considerable objection was raised to the township method of survey in view of the fact that the North Carolina land claims had been surveyed in a crazy-quilt fashion and would be difficult to fit into the rectangular township pattern. Also, in the face of opposition from the speculators, occupants were permitted to acquire title to their holdings to the extent of 200 acres, even in conflict with a North Carolina survey, if they could present North Carolina warrants for that amount. The squatters in Middle Tennessee secured the aid of the representatives of the large number of occupants in the Cherokee Reservation in obtaining the passage of that legislation, thus effecting a political alliance which was to last indefinitely. The state also provided for the survey of the college and academy tracts in the Cherokee Reservation and for the sale of land in that area with preemption rights at \$1.00 an acre to the occupants.*¹⁸

Outside the Cherokee Reservation, as rapidly as the Indian title was extinguished the desirable lands were taken by the holders of North Carolina warrants. These proved to be so numerous that it soon became evident that the area north and east of the Congressional Reservation Line would be inadequate to satisfy them. Therefore, it became necessary in 1818 for Congress to open the Congressional Reservation to the location of new grants, largely under military warrants, as well as the old ones surveyed prior to the Compact of 1806, which had not been invalidated by that law. In that year Jackson's Purchase opened West Tennessee to settlement, and the holders of North Carolina warrants flocked to that country and soon secured title to much of the best land. Also, at about that time, the North Carolina government published in the newspapers the muster rolls of her Revolutionary companies so that the soldiers or their heirs who had not secured warrants would be able to do so. Consequently, many more warrants were issued. Provision had previously been made that the land bounties to soldiers who died without heirs should be transferred to the University of North Carolina. That institution therefore came into possession of a great number of warrants which it located on lands in West Tennessee. Tennessee, however, refused to recognize those warrants, claiming the rights of the soldiers without heirs had escheated to her or the United States. Two agents of the University of North Carolina came to Nashville in 1822 and worked out behind the scenes an arrangement with Representative Felix Grundy and Governor Carroll whereby the whole question was referred to two commissioners appointed by the governor. All of

* The difficulties involved in trying to collect even this \$1.00 an acre from those squatters, most of whom had settled under the state of Franklin treaties, and the consequent hardships of the colleges and academies will be treated in a later chapter.

these individuals had already agreed upon a solution—Tennessee's recognition of the warrants and exemption of the lands from taxation for a period of years in exchange for the University of North Carolina's sharing the warrants with Cumberland and East Tennessee colleges. Thus those institutions obtained some resources which made up in part for the expected revenue which had failed to materialize from the Compact of 1806 grants. At the next two sessions of the legislature the University of North Carolina presented additional warrants, but the legislators refused to validate them, probably angered by the trick which had been played on them in 1822. The opposition was led by a strange combination—an alumnus of the University, James K. Polk, and the unlettered frontiersman, David Crockett. The next legislature, of which neither Polk nor Crockett was a member, validated the warrants on condition that they were shared with the Tennessee colleges and common schools.¹⁹

When North Carolina ceded its western lands to the United States in 1789-90, the government expected to obtain considerable revenue from the sale of those lands. Actually, the United States did not receive one cent of revenue. By the Compact of 1806 her claim was restricted to the area of the Congressional Reservation, and even there existing claims under North Carolina warrants already surveyed and recorded were considered valid. After 1818 thousands of new warrants to soldiers and their heirs were also located there. The result was that very little land was left for disposal, and there developed in Tennessee a movement in favor of the United States ceding this remaining land to the state for educational purposes. In 1823 Representative James K. Polk drafted a memorial which the legislature sent to Congress making such a request. His major argument was that the irregularity and extent of North Carolina land claims had made it impossible for Tennessee to set aside more than 22,705 acres of land for common schools* instead of the more than 400,000 acres envisioned under the Compact of 1806. When Polk became a member of Congress he sponsored legislation to make such a cession, but was frustrated in this effort by his Tennessee colleague, David Crockett. The West Tennessee hunter disavowed any objections to providing for common schools, but expressed a fear that the design was to use the revenue for a college, as John Bell actually was advocating, which would be of no use to his poor constituents. If they could get merely a "common country" school to which they could send their "Big Boys in the winter" and "little ones all the year," they would consider themselves fortunate. Even after Polk had added an amendment specifying common schools, Crockett refused to support the measure unless it

* In 1825 the legislature provided that these and other school lands be sold and the revenue added to the school fund, but the state supreme court declared the law in violation of the Compact of 1806. After Congress in 1843 permitted their sale, practically all of the school lands were sold except for one tract in Polk County. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 353-54.



Lawrenceburg—David Crockett Statue

provided for the donation of 160 acres to every occupant in the area, or at least safeguarded their right to buy their holdings at a nominal price. From his experience in the state legislature Crockett had learned that it was not safe to trust that body to provide adequately for the occupants when their interests conflicted with those of the big land speculators. It was this issue which was the real cause of Crockett's break with the Jacksonians, rather than his opposition to Jackson's Indian policy. Eventually, Congress in 1841 authorized Tennessee to sell the waste land in the Congressional Reservation for the federal government's benefit, but granting occupants preemption rights to 200 acres at 12½ cents an acre. In 1846 Congress ceded the remaining lands, together with

the revenue obtained since 1841, to Tennessee on condition that \$40,000 of the revenue be used for the establishment of a college in West Tennessee.*²⁰

Not only in the Congressional Reservation but also in the rest of the state, except in the area reserved for the Cherokee, south of the French Broad, all the desirable lands were taken by holders of North Carolina warrants. Since Tennessee was prohibited from selling land at less than the national price, the remaining waste land could not be sold until that restriction was removed in 1823. In that year the legislature provided for the sale of that waste land at 12½ cents an acre, the receipts to go into the common school fund which was created by the same law.²¹

It was from the sale of land in the Cherokee Reservation that Tennessee received the largest part of its land revenue, since that region was not available for the location of North Carolina warrants. At the time of the Compact of 1806 only about one-third of the Reservation—north of the Little Tennessee River—had been cleared of the Indian title. Most of the good land in that area, including the college and academy tracts, was occupied by squatters who, as mentioned above, were allowed preemption rights at \$1.00 an acre. In view of the inability of the state to collect even that amount from those people, as will be discussed in a subsequent chapter, the amount of revenue obtained was relatively small. From the proceeds of the sales of land outside the college and academy tracts about \$12,000 was used for the improvement of the Holston and Tennessee rivers.²²

By Calhoun's Treaty of 1819 another section of the Cherokee Reservation was acquired. It included the area between the Little Tennessee and Hiwassee rivers (except for the mountainous country along the eastern border) plus a small tract north of the Little Tennessee along the foothills of the Great Smokies which had not been included in the 1798 cession. When surveyed into townships and sections this region became known as the Hiwassee District. Since it was relatively free of squatters, as well as being closed to North Carolina warrant holders, the state had great expectations of revenue from the sale of land in the district, but the economic depression which began in 1819 interfered. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the proceeds from sales were used as a backing for the paper money issued by Grundy's loan office (Bank of the State of Tennessee) established in 1820. At first the land, except for the sections reserved for schools, was sold at auction at a minimum of \$2.00 an acre, with preemption rights granted to occupants at one-half that price. When Congress in 1823 released Tennessee from the obligation not to sell land at less than national minimum price, the legislature introduced a graduation system for the sale of the remaining lands in the district. For six months an occupant

* West Tennessee College (now Union University) at Jackson was the recipient of this grant. Thus, in the long run, Crockett's fears were justified; but by that time there was a greater need for a college.

was permitted to purchase a quarter section (160 acres) which he occupied for \$1.25 an acre. For the next three months anyone could buy the land at that price. Then for three months the occupants were given the right to buy at \$1.00 an acre, and for the next three months anyone could buy at the same price. In this manner the price was gradually lowered to 50 cents an acre, then to 25 cents, and finally to 12½ cents. The inventor of this graduation scheme appears to have been J. C. Mitchell of McMinn County, and it seems also that he was the source of Senator Thomas H. Benton's similar proposal for the national land system for which he was noted. The remaining portion of the Cherokee Reservation, called the Ocoee District, between the Hiwassee and Tennessee rivers and the southern boundary of the state, became available for white settlement when the Cherokee were moved west in 1838. This area also was surveyed into townships and sections and the land sold under a graduation system. For the Ocoee District, however, the graduated prices ranged from \$7.50 down to one cent an acre. Ultimately, the revenue from the sales of land in the Hiwassee and Ocoee districts, except for \$150,000 appropriated for internal improvements in 1830, became the major part of the common school fund* of the state.²³

* In 1858 the Tennessee code gave the total amount of the fund as \$1,500,000, but according to the report of the Bank of Tennessee the total receipts of the fund amounted to about \$1,110,000. Regardless of the total, all but an insignificant amount had come from land revenue. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 356-57.

CHAPTER XV.—NOTES

1. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 241-43; Minnie Hazel Myers, "Tennessee's Policy in the Removal of the Cherokee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1937), 12-24; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 174-83; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 32-35, 53-70; Williams (ed.), "Sevier's Journal," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 3 (1931), 158-63; No. 4 (1932), 142-67; No. 5, (1933), 155-72.
2. Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 189-94; Greer Jackson Kimery, "Return Jonathan Meigs, Cherokee Indian Agent, 1801-1823" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1948), 34-40; Robert H. White, "Tennessee's Four Capitals," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 6 (1934), 30-34; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 451-54; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 148, 153; Charles C. Royce, "Indian Land Cessions in the United States," *Eighteenth Annual Report*, Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1899), Part II, 668-69, Plates LXI, CXLIII; Guy B. Braden, "The Colberts and the Chickasaw Nation," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (September, 1958), 237-40.
3. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 244-45.
4. Annie Heloise Abel, "The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1906 (2 vols., Washington, 1908), I, 241-55, 276-82; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 212-17; Myers, "Tennessee's Policy," 1-11, 26-53; Malone, *Cherokees*, 66-70; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 202-04.

5. Quoted in Malone, *Cherokees*, 69.
6. Myers, "Tennessee's Policy," 54-59; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 294-306; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 217-28; "Indian Land Cessions," Plate CLXI; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 246-48.
7. *Ibid.*; Cotterill, *Southern Indians*, 206-08; Braden, "The Colberts and the Chickasaw Nation," 244-47; Williams, *West Tennessee*, 84-93, 283-306.
8. *Ibid.*, 113-59, 208; Gerald M. Capers, Jr., *The Biography of a River Town—Memphis: Its Heroic Age* (Chapel Hill, 1939), 17-74.
9. Malone, *Cherokees*, 74-90, 137-70; Abel, "Indian Consolidation," 360-61. The best work on Sequoyah is Grant Foreman, *Sequoyah* (Norman, Okla., 1938), but see also Marion L. Starkey, *The Cherokee Nation* (New York, 1946), 77-99; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 478-85, and the contemporary account, John Howard Payne, "Story of Sequoyah," of which there is a typescript in the Collection of Mrs. Penelope J. Allen, Chattanooga, from the Payne MSS, Newberry Library, Chicago. Mention has been made previously of the S. C. Williams contention as to his paternity in "Nathaniel Gist, Father of Sequoyah," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 39-54.
10. Malone, *Cherokees*, 36-73; Pound, *Benjamin Hawkins*, *passim*.
11. Malone, *Cherokees*, Chapter 7, is an excellent, concise discussion of missionary activities among those Indians. See also Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 29-76; William W. Crouch, "Missionary Activity Among the Cherokee Indians, 1757-1838" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1932); Edward Schwarze, *History of the Moravian Missions among Southern Indian Tribes* (Bethlehem, Pa., 1923); V. M. Queener, "Gideon Blackburn," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 6 (1934), 12-28; Ernest T. Thompson, *Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States* (Richmond, Va., 1934); Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Worcester, Mass., 1940); Robert Sparks Walker, *Torchlights to the Cherokees: the Brainerd Mission* (New York, 1931); Althea Bass, *Cherokee Messenger* (a biography of S. A. Worcester; Norman, Okla., 1936); Ralph H. Gabriel, *Elias Boudinot, Cherokee, and His America* (Norman, Okla., 1941); James W. Moffitt, "Early Baptist Missionary Work Among the Cherokees," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 12 (1940), 16-27; Posey, *Presbyterian Church*, 61-72; *Baptist Church*, 80-88; *Methodism*, 81-90.
12. Abel, "Indian Consolidation," 370-81; Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 100-25; Myers, "Tennessee Policy," 63-70; Stanley J. Folmsbee and Anna Grace Catron, "David Crockett: Congressman," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 29 (1957), 62-65; Jackson *Gazette*, June 26 (incorrectly dated June 19), 1830.
13. Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 127-230; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 486-99; Myers, "Tennessee Policy," 70-85; W. S. Hoffman, "Andrew Jackson, State Rightist: The Case of the Georgia Indians," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (December, 1952), 329-45. Hoffman claims that it was not the President's province to enforce a Supreme Court decision and that Jackson should not be criticized for failing to do so.
14. *Ibid.*, 86-88; Edmund C. Gass, "The Constitutional Opinions of Justice John Catron," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 54-59; St. George L. Sioussat, "Tennessee and the Removal of the Cherokee," *Sewanee Review*, XVI (July, 1908), 337-44; Tennessee Supreme Court *Reports*, 16 Tenn. 256.
15. Starkey, *Cherokee Nation*, 247-329 (which is somewhat more generous to the removal faction than other works); Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal* (Norman, 1932), 229-314; Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 253-94; Brown, *Old Frontiers*, 486-

- 519; Myers, "Tennessee Policy," 29-110; Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga Country*, 85-97.
16. *Ibid.*, 99-113; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 254.
 17. *Ibid.*, 257; Whitney, *Land Laws*, 58-61.
 18. White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 210-18; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 257-58; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 188-92; Whitney, *Land Laws*, 119-36, 341-54.
 19. *Ibid.*, 482-92; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 258-59, 364-68; Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "James K. Polk's Political Apprenticeship," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 25 (1953), 43-46; Folmsbee and Catron, "Early Career of David Crockett," 76.
 20. Folmsbee and Catron, "David Crockett: Congressman," 47ff.; Charles G. Sellers, Jr., *James K. Polk: Jacksonian* (Princeton, 1957), 122-25; Whitney, *Land Laws*, 283-85, 298-303.
 21. *Ibid.*, 308-15; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 354.
 22. *Ibid.*, 260; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 28.
 23. *Ibid.*, 23, 75-79; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 260-61; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 256-58; Whitney, *Land Laws*, 386-451.

CHAPTER XVI

Jacksonian Domination of Tennessee Politics

WHEN CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS prevented Governor McMinn's seeking another term in 1821, a lively contest developed between Edward Ward and William Carroll. Ward had many qualifications which would have made him an able executive but he lacked knowledge of frontier campaign methods, without which one could not be elected. He was a man of wealth, education, and stately bearing, but his enemies pictured him as a Federalist whose affluence and social position made him unacceptable to frontiersmen. Carroll, however, was a military hero whose Tennessee troops had withstood the heaviest shock of the British attack at New Orleans. Furthermore, after the panic of 1819, he was "a poor man." These "qualifications" were unbeatable on the American frontier, and Carroll surprised no one when he overwhelmed the Virginian.*¹

Carroll became an able governor. He was exceedingly popular, as attested by the fact that he held the office for six terms. He had no opposition in 1823, 1825, and 1829, and had little difficulty in being reelected in 1831 and 1833. Carroll's contributions—internal improvements, sound fiscal policy, educational and religious development, reform measures, and constitutional revision—were numerous and are discussed elsewhere. Important as Carroll's administration was, more than anything else Tennesseans became more concerned with Andrew Jackson's exciting demonstration of political strength in 1824 and his four-years war against Adams that ended in the Old Hero's occupying the White House in 1829.

Elections of 1824 and 1828—Perhaps no more controversial figure has performed on the American stage than Andrew Jackson. Contemporaries seldom remained neutral where he was concerned; they either loved him or despised him. Some of the great men of his times became his bitter enemies; yet, to thousands of laborers, mechanics, and farmers, he was the "Old Hero"—the "Hero of the Common Man."**

* Carroll polled 41,244 votes to Ward's 11,171. In polling the largest majority received by a candidate before the Civil War, Carroll carried every county except Hamilton and Cocke. Phelan, *Tennessee*, 252; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 237.

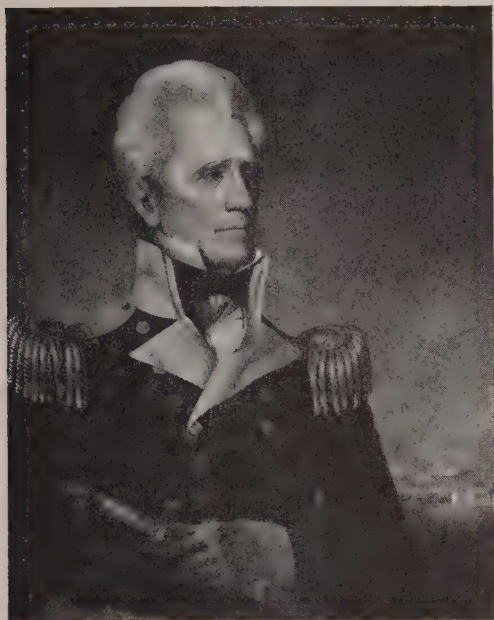
** Both contemporaries and historians of a later period have described Jackson as a complex figure. James Parton, writing little more than a decade after the Hero's

Jackson emerged from the Battle of New Orleans as a national hero. Carroll and others immediately realized the political importance of the victory and approached the General on the question of becoming a presidential candidate. After a trip which took him into several of the Northern states, Carroll wrote Jackson that "leading characters" in Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania had asked him whether the Old Hero would permit his name to be used as a Democratic candidate in 1820. Jackson apparently gave his admirers little encouragement. Three years later, however, events in Florida again brought him into the national limelight. The Seminole Indians, escaped slaves, free-booters, and smugglers, were using the Spanish peninsula as a base of operations, and Jackson was dispatched to the border to prevent further depredations against American citizens. When a band of the renegades appeared in Georgia, Jackson chased them back into Florida. Not content with that, he destroyed several Spanish posts, drove the governor and garrison out of Pensacola, executed two British subjects, and returned to United States territory. The episode caused the Monroe administration considerable embarrassment, but the skillful diplomacy of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams smoothed over the international quarrel. Jackson may have been a freebooter and a renegade in the eyes of the Spanish and British leaders, but to the western frontiersmen his claim to heroism rose even higher. Thousands of Tennesseans hailed him in Nashville when he arrived from Florida, and unanimously agreed that his conduct was "marked with energy, valor, skill and patriotism, not surpassed in the annals of our country."²

death, despaired at the conflicting sources which his research uncovered and concluded that his subject was both a patriot and a traitor. Old Hickory "was one of the greatest of generals, and wholly ignorant of the art of war. [He was] a writer brilliant, elegant, eloquent, without being able to compose a correct sentence, or spell words of four syllables. The first statesman, he never devised, he never framed a measure. He was the most candid of men, and was capable of the profoundest dissimulation. [He was] a most law-defying, law-obeying citizen. A stickler for discipline, he never hesitated to disobey his superior. [He was] a democratic autocrat . . . [, an] urbane savage . . . [, and an] atrocious saint." Parton, *Andrew Jackson*, I, vii. Historians have quarreled for decades over whether Jackson was a sincere democrat or an opportunist. Thomas P. Abernethy has been the most consistent writer in upholding the latter point of view. See his *Frontier to Plantation*, and his "Andrew Jackson and the Rise of Southwestern Democracy," *American Historical Review*, XXXIII (October, 1927), 76. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in his *Age of Jackson* (Boston, 1945), has supported the former viewpoint. His thesis has been attacked by competent scholars, and Charles Grier Sellers has discussed the controversy adequately in his "Andrew Jackson Versus the Historians," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLIV (March, 1958). See also William E. Dodd, "Andrew Jackson and His Enemies," *Century*, CXI (April, 1926), 734-45, and Arda Walker, "Andrew Jackson: Frontier Democrat," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 59-86.

In 1821 Jackson was named governor of Florida, but he resigned after serving only a few months. He returned to Nashville with the announced intention of retiring to "the pleasures of domestic felicity."³

In the meantime the remnants of the old Blount faction in Tennessee politics fought for their political lives. Although Tennessee had entered the Union as a strong Republican state, factions within the party had developed soon after statehood. By the time of Jackson's emergence as a national hero in 1815,



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Andrew Jackson

at least two combinations could be discerned. One, tracing its origin to William Blount and his allies, was led by John Overton, Pleasant M. Miller, John H. Eaton, and such lesser lights as William B. Lewis, Hugh Lawson White, and Governor Joseph McMinn. They were joined later by Felix Grundy, James K. Polk, and Cave Johnson. Overton and Jackson had become friends as early as 1789, when they found lodging together in the home of Jackson's future mother-in-law, the widow of Colonel John Donelson. Overton became a lawyer, bank president, planter, and land speculator. These pursuits made him "the wealthiest man in Tennessee" and enabled him to climb to the top of the political ladder in the state. He came to the aid of Old Hickory after the

General's raid in Florida. As leader of the "Nashville Junto," he began to push forward the name of Andrew Jackson for the presidency shortly after the election of 1820, and was in correspondence with Carroll and others before that time. Miller, a Knoxville businessman, politician, and son-in-law of the late William Blount, became identified with Overton as a master strategist for the Hero. John Eaton was a Nashville politician who became Jackson's "campaign manager" soon after the election of 1820 and shared with Overton and Miller the credit for Jackson's success. Lewis could not play a role comparable to that of Overton, Miller, or Eaton, but he did perform yeoman service for the Chief by editing and polishing his speeches, uncovering political verbal ammunition for him, and later becoming his political "hatchet man." Hugh Lawson White had served as a member of the Supreme Court of Law and Equity, a state senator, and for years as president of the Bank of the State of

Tennessee (the Old State Bank), located at Knoxville. His career and eventual break with Jackson will be discussed in the next chapter. McMinn was governor from 1815 to 1821, as noted earlier.⁴

The other combination in the party was the John Sevier faction, which lacked a strong leader after the former Governor's death in 1815. Andrew Erwin, a wealthy planter and land speculator from Bedford County, was looked upon as the leader of the faction. Congressman John Cocke, Congressman Newton Cannon, and Senator John Williams also were counted within the fold. Leaders of the group discovered a champion in William Carroll who, as observed earlier, soundly defeated the Overton-Jackson backed candidacy of Edward Ward in 1821. Jackson's display of strength in 1824 and 1828 quieted leaders of this group for several years, but shortly after the beginning of the Old Hero's second term they came again to the forefront and united to weaken the Chief's grip on the state. The work of this faction will be discussed further in the next chapter.⁵

The remnants of the old Blount faction considered running Jackson for the presidency in 1820 but became discouraged by the apparent popularity of President Monroe. Soon after the Virginian's second inauguration Eaton and others pushed Jackson forward as a presidential contender for 1824.* Their love for the Chief was a secondary factor, however, for their primary motive was to restore their political fortunes—damaged by Carroll's gubernatorial victory in 1821—by drawing on the Hero's immense store of personal appeal. Some members of the group, however, apparently uncertain about Jackson's chances, endorsed both Adams and Clay early in 1822. Should Jackson decide not to be a candidate, or should others not flock to his standard, they wished still to have some of the federal patronage at their disposal. They received considerable encouragement in July, 1822, when members of the state legislature unanimously endorsed the General,** and again several months later when Jackson refused to leave the scene and accept President Monroe's offer of an appointment as minister to Mexico. In January, 1823, Pleasant Miller, then in the house of representatives, suggested that Jackson should oppose Carroll in the gubernatorial race of 1823; he believed that voters would elect Jackson and purge the legislature of the Erwin-Carroll faction at the same time. A crisis developed a few months later, however, when it appeared that no one could

* John C. Calhoun, William C. Crawford, Henry Clay, and John Quincy Adams also entered the contest soon after President Monroe's second inauguration and even before Jackson. Hay, "John C. Calhoun," 21.

** Legislators wrote of Jackson: ". . . he deliberates, he decides, then he acts; he is calm in deliberation, cautious in decision, efficient in action. Such a man we are willing to aid in electing to the highest office in the gift of a free people. The welfare of the country may be safely entrusted to the hands of him who has experienced every privation, and encountered every danger, to promote its safety, its honor, and its glory." Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 266.

challenge successfully United States Senator John Williams' bid for reelection. The Senator was Jackson's bitter enemy; if he were reelected he would do great harm to the Hero's cause. Therefore, the Jackson men desperately cast about for a man who could defeat Williams. When they were assured that no one but the General himself had a chance to defeat Williams, they hastened to the Hermitage and persuaded the Hero to go at once to Murfreesboro where the legislature was in session. The Old Chief arrived in time to appear before the legislators who then chose him instead of Williams by a vote of 35 to 25. Jackson accepted his seat in the Senate reluctantly, and confided to John Coffee his deep regret at being elected. The prospect of leaving his wife, Rachel, disturbed him. His supporters, however, were jubilant and they attached great significance to the victory. Lewis believed a defeat "might have destroyed. . . [Jackson's] prospects for the presidency."⁶

The American people, and especially Tennesseans, viewed the approaching election year with great interest. In each of the earlier presidential contests the party nominee had been selected by a congressional caucus; that is, by the party members then serving in Congress. But since only one party was active (the Federalists did not nominate a candidate after 1816) many Republicans believed that nomination by caucus would be unfair. Opponents of "King Caucus" found vociferous supporters in the West where seeds of democracy rapidly were germinating and where the settlers, deprived of much influence in the nation's capital, now hoped to ride into power on the shoulders of Jackson or Clay. Therefore, when members of the caucus nominated William Crawford, of Georgia, who had quarreled earlier with Jackson, Republicans in both East and West vowed that they would not support him. John Quincy Adams, son of the second President, was selected by party stalwarts in the East. When Western politicians could not agree on a single candidate, both Jackson and Clay were nominated by their respective supporters. John C. Calhoun, who had been considered a candidate, compromised by agreeing to accept the vice presidency.

The results of the election of 1824 are known to all who have even a superficial knowledge of American history. Jackson received 99 electoral votes, Adams polled 84, Crawford was given 41, and Clay received 37.* Of the popular votes, Jackson polled 152,901 and Adams, his nearest opponent, received 114,023. Weeks before the election, sagacious political observers agreed that the contest was between Adams and Jackson. The Hero had little opposition in Tennessee; by election day a relatively small number of Tennesseans even bothered to go to the polls, so confident were they that their candidate would carry the state. Jackson, of course, was not elected President. Because no candidate had

* Jackson received the electoral votes of Tennessee, Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—Andrew Jackson Statue

a majority of the electoral votes, it became the constitutionally-required duty of the House of Representatives to choose the President from among the top three candidates. Crawford, who during the campaign had suffered a stroke of paralysis, was not seriously considered. The powerful Clay, then speaker of the House, used his influence for Adams, who was elected. The Hero accepted his defeat graciously until he heard that Adams had appointed Clay as secretary of state. The apparent "bargain" and open "corruption," however, caused him to fly into a rage. He vowed to defeat the conniving Adams and his chief cabinet official, the latter of whom he now denominated "the Judas of the West." A few months after the inauguration he resigned his Senate seat in Washington and returned to Tennessee, determined to devote full time to the campaign of 1828 and to unseat those who had been guilty of such "bare faced corruption."⁷

The General remained in relative quietude during the next three years but he kept up a voluminous correspondence with many of the leading politicians of the nation. John Eaton took the lead in strengthening the Jackson party. He consummated an alliance with Vice President Calhoun and also brought in other converts. Calhoun, realizing the poor condition of Jackson's health, believed that the General, if elected in 1828, would serve only one term. Then he (Calhoun) would fall heir to the administration mantle. Eaton, a master politician, took care to cement the union. The Jackson men, now including Overton, Lewis, Coffee, Grundy, and Sam Houston, were urged to work amicably with George McDuffie, Duff Green, Henry Lee, and others who supported the South Carolinian. In addition, new converts, including Martin Van Buren, Samuel Swartout, and Thomas Hart Benton, were encouraged. Green, with money borrowed from Eaton, purchased the *United States Telegraph*, a Washington daily, and soon became the foremost Jackson editor in the country. A Missourian, Green "was endowed with a talent," one author has written, "that enabled him to enshroud his opponents with the appearance of evil without establishing the concrete evidence of it." Van Buren, a Crawford supporter in 1824, was the most valuable convert because he controlled the New York vote. Benton, now in Missouri, had wounded Jackson in the shoulder during one of their quarrels years earlier in Nashville, but the two men had become reconciled during Jackson's first year in the Senate; he, like Van Buren, was looked upon as being a most valuable addition.⁸

Jackson opened the campaign in 1828 on the same note on which he had closed the one of four years earlier—the "corrupt bargain" charge became his theme. The campaign had scarcely begun when it degenerated into one of mudslinging in which the supporters of each candidate sought to outdo the supporters of the other. The administration group found plenty of ammunition. Jackson had married Rachel Donelson Robards in the mistaken belief that the Virginia legislature had granted her a divorce. The Chief's enemies widely publicized this unfortunate happening in addition to representing Rachel as

a woman unfit by refinement or talent to become the first lady. Critics also condemned the Hero for the execution of six deserters in the Creek campaign of 1814; others branded him as an illiterate; animadversions ran the gamut from peddling slaves to dueling, and from associating with Aaron Burr to misconduct in Florida.⁹

Adams' public career did not offer so fertile a field for political propagandists, but the Jackson newspaper editors did not hesitate to stretch the truth or to fabricate new tales. They accused the President of misuse of funds, "wasteful extravagance," and of attempting to "make use of a beautiful girl" to sway Emperor Alexander of Russia "to political purposes." He was a "Federalist," an "ingrate," a "Sabbath breaker," and a menace to the country's most sacred religious and political institutions.¹⁰

Most political observers conceded a Jackson victory several weeks before the election. Backwoodsmen of the West and mechanics of the East may not have comprehended Clay's American system or Adams' nationalism, but most assuredly they had no trouble understanding the simple message of "bargain and corruption." The Old Hero embodied their conceptions of democracy, and they readily united with him to expel from Washington the "aristocratic rascals" of the East. Jackson carried the West and South solidly. He also received all of the electoral votes of Pennsylvania, and part of those of New York, Maryland, and Maine; his margin was 178 votes to Adams' 83. In Tennessee he seemed to have few enemies. There he received 44,193 votes to 2,240 for Adams.¹¹

The contest had captured the popular imagination and had brought out throngs of voters. Twice as many Tennesseans went to the polls as had voted four years earlier. Throughout the nation shrewd politicians and newspaper editors aroused the people to such an extent that the number of people voting was the largest ever to participate in a presidential election. Yeoman farmers and frontiersmen in both the Northwest and Southwest joined Eastern laborers and mechanics in a revolt against the Virginia dynasty and the dominance of the aristocratic East.¹²

Administration and Resignation of Governor Sam Houston—William Carroll, having served for three consecutive terms, was constitutionally ineligible for the governorship in 1827. He hoped to be elected to the United States Senate in the place of John Eaton, but he failed to receive Jackson's support. The Hero held the 1827 legislature in his grasp, and all legislators knew that he preferred Eaton to Carroll. Tales of the Governor's jealousy of and lack of admiration for the Old Chief were widely repeated. Rumors that Carroll was "Henry Clay's confidential correspondent and . . . Adams' secret well wisher" were not abated by Carroll's public statement that he would support Jackson in 1828 if he (Carroll) were elected Senator. Carroll then agreed to direct the

political campaign of Sam Houston, who, in addition to Willie Blount and Newton Cannon, had announced for governor.¹³

Houston won easily. Former Governor Blount failed miserably in his attempt at a political comeback, and Cannon, a wealthy Williamson County planter, did not offer substantial opposition.* Houston polled 42,433 votes to Cannon's 31,290 and was inaugurated on October 1, 1827.¹⁴

The colorful and dramatic Houston was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia, in 1793. At the age of fourteen he moved with his widowed mother and eight brothers and sisters to Blount County. The "wild and impetuous" youth (as Houston later described himself) soon ran away from home and took up abode with the Cherokee Indians for three years; it was they who named him "The Raven." Enlisting in the United States army in 1813, he served in the Creek campaign under Jackson and was wounded at Horseshoe Bend. During the campaign he developed a great admiration for the Hero, and the two became close friends.¹⁵

For a decade after the war Houston followed a varied career, including the study and practice of law at Lebanon, election to the office of attorney general at Nashville, and service as major general of the Tennessee militia. In August, 1823, he was elected, with the support of Carroll and Jackson, to Congress from the Ninth District and served until 1827. He was an active supporter of Jackson in the presidential campaigns of 1824 and 1828. As early as 1825 he had toyed with the idea of running for governor at the expiration of Carroll's third term, and in the following year, with the encouragement of both Jackson and Carroll, he announced as a candidate.¹⁶

Houston's administration was but an interlude in the Carroll period. He continued the sound financial practices and other reforms instituted by Carroll and was considered as a protégé of his predecessor.

Fortune for The Raven began to turn soon after he became governor. In 1828 he was expelled from the Masonic Lodge of Nashville for dueling. A noticeable coolness developed between him and his erstwhile mentor, Carroll. The former Governor, somewhat chagrined at not being chosen for the United States Senate, made plans to return to the governor's chair in 1829. Houston, however, now exhibited considerable independence (undoubtedly with Jackson's encouragement) and announced his intention of opposing Carroll. The contest was settled when Houston resigned from the gubernatorial chair and withdrew from the race for reelection. The romantically inclined chieftain decided while he was governor to "settle down"; on January 22, 1829, the 35-year-old executive married 18-year-old Eliza Allen, whose father, Colonel John Allen of Gallatin, was his close friend and admirer. Houston's inability to effect marital adjustment with his young bride caused him to resign and take

* Cannon was elected governor in 1835.

up temporary residence once again with the redskins. He became the first governor in the history of the state not to serve out the term for which he was elected.¹⁷

Houston, who later secured a divorce and was married again in Texas, offered little by way of explanation for his conduct. On several occasions he replied to queries by writing, "This is a private affair. I do not recognize the right of the public to interfere in it" To his father-in-law he wrote that the young bride had been "cold" to him and that he did not believe she loved him. As mentioned, Houston returned to his Indian friends and later headed

for Texas. His claims to greatness rest more with his accomplishments in the Lone Star State than in Tennessee.¹⁸

Houston's resignation elevated William Hall, speaker of the senate, to the governorship. Hall, born in North Carolina in 1775, moved with his family to Castalian Springs in Sumner County when he was only ten years old. In 1797 he was elected to the house of representatives, and later served four terms in the senate. During the War of 1812 he fought under Andrew Jackson and rose to the rank of brigadier general. His term of office as governor was only five and one-half months. No attempt apparently was made to push him into the governor's race in 1829. He was elected to Congress two years after he retired from the gubernatorial chair.¹⁹



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Governor Sam Houston

Constitutional Convention of 1834—Perhaps the most important accomplishment of the Carroll administration was the revision of the state's fundamental law in 1834. For thirty years a minority of legislators and other interested citizens had wanted to call a constitutional convention; in 1806, for example, a legislative move to submit the question to the people was defeated by one vote. The democratic trend ushered in by Andrew Jackson, however, accentuated the need for a re-evaluation of the organic law. A section which provided for equal taxation of land, regardless of its value, was especially obnoxious to small farmers who occupied land less valuable than that of their more wealthy neighbors. Other parts of the constitution required examination. Carroll, who to many people personified democracy, had pledged his influence in favor of

a convention. Defeated by a narrow margin when submitted to the people in 1831, the proposal was accepted two years later. The vote represented a culmination of a long movement for constitutional democracy. The pressure had come mainly from the rural areas. In the rich valleys of East Tennessee and of the Cumberland Basin in Middle Tennessee voters opposed the convention. In the mountains and hilly districts, however, the people wanted a constitutional change. An examination of the returns, county by county, indicates that the poor people who wanted tax relief voted for a convention, while the well-to-do landed gentry opposed it. Indeed, as Thomas Perkins Abernethy has written, the contest "was altogether a question of the landed class against the poor."²⁰

Sixty delegates—eighteen from East Tennessee, thirty from the middle division, and twelve from the western section—assembled on May 19, 1834, in Nashville. Few of them had claim to distinction, but former Governor Willie Blount, Newton Cannon, Adam Huntsman, Robert J. McKinney, Terry H. Cahal, William B. Carter, and Francis B. Fogg were exceptions. Carter, of Carter County, was elected president.²¹

At the outset conservatives and progressives argued over the amount of revision necessary. The former wanted little or no change but the latter, while not of radical temperament, demanded some material reforms. Both sides found adequate support in the press. "A Farmer," writing in the *Nashville Whig*, pointed to the rapid growth of American democracy since 1796 and urged that increased confidence should be placed in "the yeomanry" who dominated the convention. The editor of a West Tennessee paper pointed to obsolete provisions in the old constitution and concluded that "to respect error for its venerable age . . . would be a principle of intelligence more worthy of a darker age than the present one." The editor of one Nashville paper believed that the "sterling integrity and patriotism" of the delegates would insure Tennesseans of a constitutional revision devoid of the extremes which might characterize men of more radical dispositions. Some conservatives feared a sweeping upheaval and therefore urgently cautioned moderation. Carter, for example, urged fellow members to "touch the constitution with a cautious and circumspect" hand. "Should there be in that sacred charter of liberty some articles or features of doubtful policy," he said, prudence indeed dictated that they should leave it unchanged rather than to "launch into a sea of uncertainty . . ." Cahal, a conservative from Maury County, feared that reformers would destroy constitutional democracy. Waxing eloquent and sentimental, Cahal preferred, unless delegates acted as "prudent architects," to "let . . . [the existing constitution] last forever."²²

Legislative representation was the first issue to be debated extensively. Conservatives wanted to retain unamended the provision which apportioned representation on the basis of free taxable inhabitants and limited the assembly to forty representatives and twenty senators. Especially objectionable to them

was a movement led by Adam Huntsman of Madison County, James Scott, who represented Perry, Hardin, and McNairy counties, and others from the rural districts. These reformers sought to give the counties equal representation in the legislative halls. "By having a representative from each county," Huntsman told the delegates, "the local interests of all will be attended to." Conservatives rose in vigorous opposition. "Why [should] four hundred or a thousand voters in one county . . . possess as much political power . . . as four thousand in another . . . [?]" Cahal asked rhetorically. Robert M. Burton of Wilson County, who believed the scheme to be an attempt to return to the "rotten borough system of England," asked, "Shall hills, mountains and rocks . . . be the basis of representation?" After several days of debate delegates compromised largely at the insistence of John Purdy of Henderson County; his proposal became sections five and six of Article II and apportioned representation according to the number of qualified voters but increased the number of representatives and senators.²³

Perhaps the most important victory scored by the reformers was a revision of the taxation clause. As mentioned earlier, the constitution provided for equal and uniform taxation of land; reformers contended that changing economic conditions had rendered the old system obsolete. Delegates from West Tennessee, the poorer counties of the Highland Rim, and the mountain sections of East Tennessee led the fight against those of the rich bluegrass areas of Middle Tennessee and the urban centers. Huntsman and McKinney (of Hawkins County) were influential in achieving reform. They showed how "the poor man" might pay twenty-five times more tax money than "the rich man." They condemned a system whereby a town lot worth \$10,000 and earning an annual rent of \$600 should be taxed for the same amount as one worth \$20. Conservatives apparently despaired of success in halting the reformers and, excepting Cahal, offered only half-hearted opposition. By a vote of 43 to 13 the delegates adopted a provision stating that "all property should be taxed according to its value; that value to be ascertained in such manner as the Legislature shall direct . . ."²⁴

Another change reflecting the democratic spirit of the reformers was a provision which gave voters the right to elect county officials. Under the existing constitution, members of the county courts, chosen by the legislature for life or good behavior, elected the sheriffs, trustees, coroners, and other officials. Such a practice had bred many abuses. West H. Humphreys, of Fayette County, led the reformers. He believed that popular elections of all officials would "call forth the best talents" and improve the quality of public officeholders. As a result of the reformers' efforts, the constitution was revised to give voters the right to select justices of the peace, sheriffs, trustees, and registers. Members of the county courts (who were of course the justices of the peace), retained the power to select coroners and rangers.²⁵

The slavery question had developed into a burning issue by this time and had been debated thoroughly in Virginia and other Southern states. Three months before the delegates convened the editor of a Nashville paper had predicted that concerted efforts would be made to accomplish gradual abolition and colonization. While this matter is developed more fully in our chapter on slavery, suffice it to say that scores of memorialists forwarded written petitions to delegates asking for gradual abolition. Most of them originated in East Tennessee. By a close count of 30 to 27 the delegates adopted a provision which stated that "the General Assembly shall have no power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves without the consent of their owner or owners." Free Negroes had voted under the old constitution, but under the new one the privilege was limited to free white men.²⁶

Other changes were made. Duelists were disqualified from holding office, divorces could be granted only by the courts, and lotteries were prohibited. Judges no longer could hold their positions for life but were to be selected for terms of twelve years. Property qualifications were removed as a condition for holding office.* Interestingly, the delegates retained a provision which prohibited ministers of the gospel from accepting seats in the legislature, but defeated efforts of prohibitionists to exclude alcoholics. A significant change involved the amending process. Under the constitution of 1796, two-thirds of the legislators were given authority to submit to voters the question of a convention. If a majority "of the citizens of the state voting for representatives" voted for a convention, then the next general assembly was commanded to call a convention at which revision would be considered. Under the constitution of 1834, an assembly might by a simple majority propose amendments. The next legislature, meeting two years hence, was required to act on the proposed changes; if members accepted the amendments by a two-thirds vote the matter was submitted to the people for acceptance or rejection. Amendments could not be considered more often than once in six years.**

Unlike the delegates to the convention of 1796, those of 1834 directed that their work be submitted to the voters for rejection or approval. Consequently, on the first Thursday of March the people accepted the revised constitution by a vote of 42,666 to 17,691. Only four counties—Davidson, Smith, Williamson, and Robertson—showed majorities against its ratification. On March 27, Governor Carroll proclaimed the new document to be the fundamental law of the state.²⁸

* Under the constitution of 1796 a legislator was required to "possess in his own right" not less than 200 acres of land. Governors were required to hold not less than 500 acres.

** An amendment providing for popular election of judges and district attorneys was approved in 1853.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

The Hermitage, Davidson County

Location of State Capital.—Members of the constitutional convention of 1834 settled the vexatious question of locating the state's capital by commanding the legislature of 1843 to select a permanent location within the first week of its session. Until that time the state offices had been located in four different towns. Knoxville had been the first, but Kingston, Murfreesboro, and Nashville also served as the state's capital.

Territorial Governor William Blount had established the seat of government in Knoxville. When Tennesseans drafted a constitution preparatory to becoming a state, they provided that the Knox County seat should continue as the capital until at least 1802. When the constitutional limit expired legislators decided to continue meeting in Knoxville for an indefinite period.²⁹

In 1806 the legislators voted to move the capital to Kingston, in order, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, to fulfill the terms of an Indian treaty. Consequently, on Monday, September 21, 1807, the assembly met in the Roane County seat, apparently amid considerable dissatisfaction among the

legislators. After a two-hour session they voted to "adjourn forthwith" from Kingston, and to convene two days later in Knoxville. No other legislative enactment of importance transpired, and Kingston became Tennessee's capital only for a day.³⁰

During the next decade the peripatetic legislature met in three different cities. Knoxville remained the seat of state government until 1812, at which time the solons moved to Nashville. In 1817 a dissatisfied majority in the assembly voted to move to Murfreesboro. Accordingly, on June 1, 1818, the state papers and records were moved to the Rutherford County seat. Legislative sessions were held in the county courthouse until fire destroyed the building in 1822; the following session was held in the First Presbyterian Church. The capital remained at Murfreesboro until 1826, at which time it was moved back to Nashville.³¹

Delegates to the constitutional convention, apparently disgusted with the fight for the location of the capital which appeared in almost every legislative session, provided that a permanent site should be chosen "during the first week" of the general assembly which convened in 1843. During the nine-year interim a dozen towns sought unsuccessfully to wrest the capital from Nashville. Legislators in 1843 chose Nashville, but only after a bitter legislative battle in which leaders of almost every town in the state made a bid for the political plum. The final struggle over location is discussed more fully in a later chapter.

The decade of the 1820's was a significant one for Tennesseans. Andrew Jackson, the pride of the West, became in 1824 the state's first presidential candidate and four years later Tennessee's first contribution to the White House. During much of the decade and part of the succeeding one he was quite powerful in state politics. Tennessee produced other leaders of exceptionable ability. Governor William Carroll suggested many reforms, some of which were enacted into law during the 1820's and others during the following decade. Sam Houston represented the state in Congress and also presided from the gubernatorial chair during the period. Felix Grundy and John Bell were among a half dozen other Tennesseans who were active on the national scene. Agitation for a revision of the state's organic law bore fruit in 1833 when Tennesseans voted for the first constitutional convention since the fundamental law had been framed in 1796. The approval given by the people to the delegates' work was indicative of their belief that convention members had accomplished well the task assigned to them. During the 1830's Tennesseans joined the reaction against the Hero of the Hermitage; Jackson lived for almost a decade after he vacated the White House in 1837, but at no time during this period did a Democratic presidential candidate carry Tennessee. This seemingly anomalous conduct on the part of the voters of the Volunteer State is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI—NOTES

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10. *Ibid.*, 72; Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *The Jacksonian Era, 1828-1848* (*The New American Nation Series*, New York, 1959), 27.
11. Kelsay, "Presidential Campaign of 1828," 79; Smith, "Propaganda Technique of 1828," 65; Lowe, "John H. Eaton," 142-44; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 275; Eaton, *Henry Clay*, 83.
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17. *The Autobiography of Sam Houston* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1954), 44; White (ed.),

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 29. Ramsey, *Annals*, 621; Haywood, *Civil and Political History*, 336; White, "Tennessee's Four Capitals," 29; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 321.
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CHAPTER XVII

The Rise of the Whig Party

FOR TWO DECADES after Jackson's brilliant victory at New Orleans the political vocabulary of the people of Tennessee could be summed up in the words, "Andrew Jackson." While there is probably little truth in the legend that Tennessee backwoodsmen still wrote in the Old Hero's name on their ballots ten years after his death, the story does serve to illustrate the tenacious hold which Jackson had on the popular imagination. The masses viewed him as one of their own, who shared their opinions of government, their suspicions, and their credulities. Therefore, the transfer of the state from the Jacksonian Democratic party to a foremost place in the ranks of the opposition in a relatively brief period of time arrests our attention and arouses our curiosity.¹

To a careful observer living at the time, the political shift might not have seemed odd at all. Manifestations of dissatisfaction were evident long before the General became President. Leaders of the opposition, however, while continuing to build up hatred for the Chief, had to tread softly lest they disturb the sleeping giant of public opinion. Seeds of jealousy and discontent began to be sown soon after Jackson emerged as a national figure, and while a few of them germinated during the 1820's, their full flowering was not accomplished until years later when preparations were being made for a presidential successor to the Old Chief.

As observed in a preceding chapter, Tennessee had entered the Union as a strong Republican state. Factions within the party had developed immediately, and by the time of Jackson's emergence as a national hero in 1815, at least two combinations could be discerned. One, tracing its origin to William Blount and his allies, was led by John Overton, Pleasant M. Miller, and such lesser lights as William B. Lewis, Hugh Lawson White, Governor Joseph McMinn, and Senator John H. Eaton. They were joined later by James K. Polk, Felix Grundy, and Cave Johnson.²

The opposition had equal, if not superior, talent. Its constituency varied from time to time and, until Jackson's second term, had found expression mainly through Senator John Williams of Knoxville, Congressmen Newton Cannon, David Crockett, and Thomas D. Arnold, and a variety of others, including the able Andrew Erwin, Ephraim H. Foster, and Balie Peyton.

Williams, a brother-in-law to Hugh Lawson White, had been very friendly with Jackson until the Creek War in 1814, and served with the Chief in that af-

fair. A quarrel ensued, however, shortly after Williams, then holding the rank of colonel, was ordered to return to Tennessee and recruit another force of volunteers. The War Department supplied him with a considerable stand of arms, but recruitment was slow. In the meantime, General Nathaniel W. Taylor organized a force of state militia, but lacked arms. Taylor ordered Williams to surrender his, and when the Colonel refused on the grounds that Taylor was merely a militia general while he (Williams) was an officer in the United States army, Taylor appealed to Jackson, who now held the rank of major general. The Hero wrote Williams a scathing letter of reprimand, ordered him to turn over the arms forthwith, and threatened to court-martial him for insubordination. Jackson did not carry through his threat, but he made a lasting enemy of the Colonel. Williams was elected to the United States Senate in 1815, and, as a Senator during the Seminole investigation in 1819 he vigorously attacked the Old Chief for his invasion of Florida. Williams, unlike many people, saw no halo about the Hero's head and was critical of Jackson for his land speculations. Furthermore, shortly after the election of 1820, he supported William Crawford for the 1824 presidential nomination, although it was known that the Old Chief had no respect for Crawford at the time. When Williams announced for reelection in 1823 the Overton-Miller faction opposed him, but were unable to agree upon a candidate. The names of both Miller and John Rhea were suggested, but it soon became evident that neither could command the support necessary to defeat Williams. Finally, in desperation, Lewis and Eaton put forth the name of the Old Hero himself, who hastened to Murfreesboro to appear in person before the general assembly. The legislators proceeded to choose Jackson, but with only ten votes to spare. Williams' many friends—including Governor Carroll and others in the state administration—were embittered and now had even less respect than before for the Hero of New Orleans.³

Newton Cannon had incurred the enmity of the Old Chief in 1812 when, as a young juror in the Magness case, he voted for the acquittal of David Magness who was on trial for the murder of Jackson's close friend, Patton Anderson. He further incurred the wrath of the Hero during the Creek campaign of 1813 when, after leading a regiment to Jackson's aid, he proceeded to bring it back to Tennessee immediately upon the expiration of the soldiers' three months enlistment period, despite vigorous objection from Jackson. Cannon ran for Congress in the same year but was defeated by Felix Grundy, who resigned several months later. He was then chosen to fill the vacancy and in Washington he favored internal improvements, supported Crawford's Cherokee treaty, and voted on other measures in a manner to incur further disapproval of Jackson.

Crockett had acquired considerable following in West Tennessee, and became the spokesman against Jackson in that frontier region. He had been a member of the general assembly in 1823 and had voted against the Chief in the senatorial contest of that year. He entered Congress in 1827 as a supporter of Jackson's



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Chilhowee Park, Main Exhibit Building

candidacy for president, but cooled toward the Hero soon after the election. He delivered, and mailed to his constituents, hundreds of anti-Jackson speeches, which became a reason why Jackson turned the full force of his political machine against him in his bid for reelection in 1831. Crockett was beaten but returned in 1833. He was defeated again in 1835 when the Jackson forces brought out peg-legged Adam Huntsman, and Crockett soon departed for Texas.

Andrew Erwin, a planter and land speculator from Bedford County, was the Chief's bitter enemy of long standing, the quarrel having stemmed from the Dickinson-Jackson duel of 1806. The widow and small children which Dickinson left when Old Hickory's fatal bullet struck him in the chest were Erwin's daughter and grandchildren. The Bedford Countian became a master strategist of the anti-Jackson faction on the state level after James Knox Polk, with Jackson's support, defeated him in a bid for Congress in 1825. In the meanwhile he and Jackson had become engaged in bitter litigation which brought Erwin to the brink of financial

ruin. He therefore came to despise the Chief with a vengeance and to bide his time for revenge.

Among the younger, but very effective, opponents was Balie Peyton, a legislator from Gallatin. He entered the federal House of Representatives during the Bank controversy and supported the President's position. Both he and Foster backed Jackson until it became apparent that the Chief would support Van Buren for the presidency in 1836 instead of Hugh Lawson White, after which they broke with the Hero and later became Whigs.⁴

In addition to the strong Jackson men, not to mention the opposition, others were in and out of both factions. William Carroll began his career without Jacksonian support, but later joined Old Hickory's camp; on the other hand, Hugh Lawson White began as a Jackson man and remained within the fold until well into the President's second term. John Bell was inconsistent, but had no admiration for the Hero. Neither faction stressed issues; each was held together by common friendships and common enmities.⁵

Opposition to the Hero was quieted somewhat after this, especially when he led the field in the presidential election of 1824. As he girded his loins for 1828, rumblings of opposition and discontent were heard less frequently. Shortly before the election he did incur the enmity of John Bell, however, whose powerful influence in the state was to spell his undoing in 1836. Sam Houston, then Congressman from the Nashville district, announced in 1826 that he would be a candidate to succeed Governor William Carroll the following year, at which time the popular executive would be barred constitutionally from seeking another consecutive term. Therefore, John Bell, a political unknown, and Felix Grundy, an experienced politician twenty years Bell's senior, announced for Houston's congressional post. Both men courted Jackson's favor and both claimed to be supporters of the Hero's presidential aspirations. Grundy became the recipient of the Old Chief's hearty and open support, while the state administration was friendly to Bell. Jackson swung the support of the war veterans, but it was insufficient to carry for Grundy a margin of victory. Bell won by over one thousand votes.* In order to keep up appearances, Bell continued nominally as a supporter of the Hero's presidential aspirations, but inwardly he retained little affection for him.⁶

Jackson swept the country in the presidential election of 1828, but again he made enemies among political leaders in his home state. He disturbed Hugh Lawson White and Pleasant M. Miller, particularly, when he named John Eaton to his

* Although the combined forces of Jackson and Grundy could not achieve victory in 1827, in the following year the Old General received 95 per cent of the state's votes when he ran for President. It was another indication of the Hero's strength in national affairs and of his repudiation in state and local matters.

Although Grundy was defeated in his congressional aspirations, he was not long out of office. Two years later, when Jackson appointed Senator John H. Eaton to a cabinet post, Grundy was named to fill the senatorial seat.

Cabinet and he offended Carroll to the point where the powerful former Governor was ready to quit the party. The alienation of White's affections was especially unfortunate. As mentioned, the East Tennessean had risen to prominence even before Jackson and had been elected to a place on the bench of the highest court of the state in 1801. Later he became Jackson's strong right arm in East Tennessee and, after the presidential election, he remained "close by Jackson's side" in Washington to give advice on the forming of the new administration. By the time of the inauguration, however, White realized that members of the Overton-Lewis faction sought to eject him from the immediate attention of the President-elect. White had expected a cabinet post, preferably that of secretary of war, but his suspicions of the Overton-Lewis faction were confirmed when the appointment was given to John Eaton.* As a matter of fact, the whole Tennessee congressional delegation was disturbed at the apparent hold which the Overton-Eaton-Lewis group seemed to have on the General. Pleasant M. Miller, running as the Hero's candidate against Congressman Davy Crockett, withdrew from the race in disgust and wrote a blistering attack on the President for appointing members of Congress to cabinet positions.⁷

The Carroll-Jackson feud reached crisis proportions shortly after the President's inauguration. As observed in a previous chapter, Houston was a candidate to succeed himself in the gubernatorial election of 1829, but the popular Carroll also made plans to return to the governor's chair. Incumbent Houston had Old Hickory's support and, according to one source, Carroll prepared to leave the party. Events took care of themselves, however, when Houston, disturbed by marital troubles, resigned the governorship, withdrew from the gubernatorial campaign, and departed to join his Indian friends. Carroll was now elected without opposition, and the enmity between him and the Hero subsided.⁸

Most of the state's delegation in Washington, while not sympathetic with much of the Hero's conduct, did remain loyal to him. Senator Felix Grundy defended Calhoun's states' rights position in the debates on the Foot Resolution, and became disturbed at Jackson's treatment of the South Carolinian in 1832. When Grundy sought reelection in 1833 he found opposition in John Eaton, who had the endorsement of the Chief. It was not until the fifty-fifth ballot, after another candidate had withdrawn in favor of Grundy, that the incumbent was reelected. Although somewhat disheartened, Grundy continued to work within the Jacksonian folds. The only member of the Tennessee delegation having an open break with the Old Hero at this time was David Crockett. The colorful West Tennessean for years had cared little for Jackson, and his defection became grist for the Adams-Clay mill in the campaign of 1828. Crockett came to be in great demand in the Northern states as a public speaker, and his homespun

* Jackson later intimated that he had offered White a cabinet position but the Judge had declined. See Nancy N. Scott (ed.), *A Memoir of Hugh Lawson White . . . with Selections from his Speeches and Correspondence* (Philadelphia, 1856), 266.

manner, coupled with his anti-Jackson harangues, entertained many opposition audiences. As has been mentioned, Crockett's bid for reelection in 1835 resulted in his defeat when the Jackson faction brought out Adam Huntsman as his opponent.⁹

To the casual observer in 1833 all must have seemed well for Jackson. The events described above involved mainly the political leaders, and to the rank and file the Old Hero continued to appear unscathed and invincible. Beneath the surface, however, all was not well within the ranks of the Tennessee Democrats. The Overton-Lewis-Eaton* faction was powerful, and considered itself the sole executor of the political will of Andrew Jackson in Tennessee. Another group, also Jackson men, was composed of Senators Grundy and White, Congressmen James K. Polk and Cave Johnson, and Samuel H. Laughlin, editor of the *Nashville Banner*. This group resented the pretensions of the self-styled exclusive Jackson contingent.¹⁰ The third was the anti-Jackson faction. It was made up of a large group of Nashville businessmen and prominent political leaders from over the state, the latter including Newton Cannon and Andrew Erwin, of Middle Tennessee; Crockett, who led the opposition in the Western District; and John and Thomas L. Williams and others in East Tennessee. The veto of the Bank bill and the subsequent removal of funds caused considerable unrest among the rising commercial classes in Nashville and added many people to the anti-Jackson fold. Hundreds gathered in Nashville in April, 1833, to defend western credit and to denounce as "unfortunate," "unwise," and "most unjust" Polk's report which condemned the Bank and upheld Jackson. As was true earlier, these factions were by no means solidified, but there was an occasional shifting pattern of alignment among them. In further explanation of the factional divisions, it should be remembered that Jackson, who became virtually "King Andrew I" on the national scene, was never able completely to control politics on the state and local levels in Tennessee. This is an important point seldom realized and understood by modern generations of Jackson admirers. Too, it must be remembered that he was never generally popular with the political leaders—many of whom saw in him a man of military talents but no qualities of a statesman—except those who sought personal gain at the expense of Jackson's popularity with the masses.¹¹

Despite the rumblings of unrest, the Old General's national popularity still would have enabled him to keep control of his home state in the 1836 election had he not been resolute in his determination to secure the Democratic nomination for Martin Van Buren. The "Sage of Kinderhook" was never popular in Tennessee. He had not supported Jackson in 1824, but had moved into the Jacksonian orbit sufficiently by 1828 to reap ample rewards. In the eyes of Tennesseans, he had ingratiated himself with the President to such an extent that the Old Chief

* Overton, the man who had been content to remain in the background and promote the fortunes of Jackson, died early in 1833, but his influence lived on.

had become mesmerized by "The Little Magician's"* magic, and thus unwisely had begun to groom Van Buren as a successor. Many Tennesseans hoped to pluck Jackson support for the popular Hugh Lawson White, and, knowing that the Jackson nod was tantamount to nomination, they now turned the full impact of their wrath against Van Buren. As events developed, John Bell and White became the leaders of the anti-Jackson group, and, concomitantly, the nemesis of the Van Buren-Jackson crowd in Tennessee.

John Bell Leads the Opposition—John Bell is often considered as the "creator" of the Whig party in Tennessee. As indicated earlier, he never professed great love for the Old Hero, although he had avoided an open break because of Jackson's political prowess. A factor which greatly affected Bell's relations with his party was the rivalry in 1833-1834 between him and Polk for the speakership of the House of Representatives. Speaker Andrew Stevenson became the President's choice for the position of minister to England in 1833, and thus the speakership became vacant. Bell was the immediate choice of Lewis and Francis Blair, editor of the pro-Jackson *Washington Globe*. Polk and Congressman Cave Johnson, however, pushed the former's candidacy and found fair support among the Jackson men. The Old Chief at the beginning took no active part in the affair, but it was generally understood that he preferred Polk. Finally, in June, 1834, ten ballots were required before Bell emerged the victor, 114 to 78. By the time of the election Jackson manifested considerable interest. He was bitterly disappointed by the result and was said to have remained in a bad humor for several days thereafter. Polk's support came entirely from Jackson-Van Buren men. Bell polled more than twenty votes from Jackson supporters, but his margin of victory came from the opposition, particularly from friends of the Bank, to whom Bell had been as friendly as political expediency would permit.¹²

Polk was a poor loser.** He returned to Tennessee in haste to spread the rumor that Bell had gone over to the opposition and denounced him for his alleged "treachery." The Polk-Bell feud now waxed bitter and became an important factor in the emergence of the Whig party in the state. The President also turned on Bell and wrote to Van Buren to assure him that the new Speaker would be "politically gone" unless he changed his ways and emerged as a strong opponent of the Bank.¹³ Bell refrained from an attack on Jackson, but he did not spare Polk. By inference he accused the Maury Countian of hanging to the coat-tails of the

* Van Buren's home was in Kinderhook, New York, which still retained much of its early Dutch influence and many residents of Dutch ancestry. Van Buren also was referred to frequently as "The Little Magician," because of his alleged skill at "pulling" political "deals."

** Late in the next year he again contested the speakership with Bell and defeated him. Bell unsuccessfully challenged him in 1837, and Polk continued as speaker until his resignation in 1839 to become a candidate for governor.

President—a thing which Bell insisted he would never do to attain political preference. The Speaker now was at the crossroads, and the only direction open seemed to be one which led him farther from the Hero of the Common Man.¹⁴

Fortunately for Bell, however, the two principal newspapers of the state lined up behind him and against Van Buren. The Nashville *Banner* was edited by a faithful Polk-Grundy-Van Buren man, Samuel H. Laughlin, but it was published by W. Hassell Hunt, a Nashville businessman sympathetic to the United States Bank. Hunt summarily dismissed Laughlin, and supported Bell instead of the Jackson party. Allen Hall's Nashville *Republican and State Gazette* also took up Bell's fight, as did many other, although less influential, papers of the state. Polk was unable to gain newspaper support in Nashville, except in the small tri-weekly *Union*.¹⁵

Although the breach between the President and the Speaker apparently widened day by day, both hesitated to make a move which would bring an irreparable breach. Bell had determined to be fair and impartial, and apparently employed care in selecting a large number of Jackson men for the committee chairmanships. Polk, for example, was retained as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. An examination of Bell's positions on various issues dear to Old Hickory indicates, however, that he was never a heart-and-soul Jackson man. He might have broken with the Hero before had he not feared political destruction. On the nullification issue, for example, he was sympathetic to Calhoun, and took a stand on the Force Bill in which he questioned the constitutionality and propriety of using military force. However, he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee at the time, and political expediency had required that he steer the measure successfully through the House. The fact that he was sympathetic to a United States Bank was well known and was pleasing to his Nashville constituents, although he was not in complete accord with the Bank as Nicholas Biddle had established it and he believed that some revisions were necessary. He did, however, vote with the Administration against rechartering but took no active part in the debates—a thing for which Jackson criticized him.¹⁶

Bell was now in an awkward position, politically, and could not remain there indefinitely. The presidential election was not far off, and he could not creep meekly back into the Van Buren ranks. He at first had favored Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, for the Democratic nomination for 1836, but the emergence of the name of Hugh Lawson White was even more pleasing to him. Soon thereafter he became a leader in the White forces, not so much because he was endeared and indebted to White—although he did hold him in high esteem—but because he realized that his own political future was involved.¹⁷

The possibility of White's candidacy had become a leading topic for conversation as early as the constitutional convention of 1834. The following December, 1834, the entire Tennessee congressional delegation, with the exception of Grundy, Polk, and Cave Johnson, endorsed White for the nomination in an informal ses-

sion at the Washington residence of Balie Peyton.* The movement was a popular one, and two weeks later the Alabama legislature formally nominated him.** Democratic leaders close to the President apparently did not object to White's candidacy in a Democratic convention, for they were confident that he would be overwhelmed by the Jackson choice. They did fear White's emergence as an opposition candidate, however.

As mentioned earlier, Jackson and White had been close friends, and White, like Bell, had entered politics as a warm supporter of the Old Hero. In 1825 White succeeded Jackson (who had resigned) in the Senate, and it was also White from whom the Old Chief had sought advice both before and after his election to the presidency in 1828. The Senator had been in harmony with Jackson on the bank issue and had hewed to a strict constitutional line. He had served as chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs and had agreed with Jackson on the removal question. When the cabinet was reorganized in 1831 Jackson sought the services of White, but the Judge had declined. Even so, Jackson still could write in August, 1831, that White was an "upright and incorruptible patriot." Later, White incurred executive displeasure, however, when as temporary chairman of the Senate following Calhoun's resignation as Vice President he appointed John M. Clayton—rather than a staunch Jackson man—as chairman of a committee to consider Clay's compromise tariff measure of 1833.*** Despite this, in November of that year White and the President had a lengthy conference which left the Chief confident of his loyalty.¹⁸

White discouraged the movement to endorse him for the presidency. Throughout 1833 and 1834, however, friends from over the state wrote letters in which they urged him to become a candidate. Few if any of White's supporters—and certainly not White himself—had any intention of becoming members of the Whig party at this time. Rather, they sought to pull away enough support from Van Buren on one side and from the Whig party on the other to force the President to recognize that White should be the recipient of the Jackson mantle instead of the "Little Magician." Cave Johnson, who was favorable to White but supported Van Buren only because the Old Chief insisted upon it, expressed to Bell the fear that an opposition movement in Tennessee might play into the hands of the Whigs. Bell believed, however, that the Whigs were too poorly organized to be able to agree upon one candidate by 1836, and if they did and if Johnson's fears

* The Tennessee delegation apparently did not consider the action to be a flaunting of Jackson. Distrust of Van Buren, belief that White was a superior candidate, and state pride no doubt prompted them to attempt by their action to dissuade Jackson from his insistence upon the acceptance of Van Buren.

** Pressure from the Jackson forces caused the Alabama legislature later to rescind the nomination.

*** Jackson wrote Felix Grundy that White had "insulted" him when he appointed Clayton instead of a strong Jackson man.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Belle Meade Mansion, near Nashville

proved well-founded, then White's supporters might still have time to withdraw the name of their candidate.

In the autumn of 1834 an indiscreet remark by the Old General caused the Judge to take a stand which all the solicitation of his friends had not been able to accomplish. Jackson threatened the Senator and advised that he would make the name of Hugh Lawson White "odious" in Tennessee politics should he accept a nomination for the presidency. The bold statement elicited from White the declaration that "Despotic power never has governed me, and never shall govern me," and made the Senator a serious contender for the nomination. He then delivered many speeches in which he expressed the same independent stand, and on one occasion he exclaimed that God had not intended that he should "be the slave of any man or set of men."¹⁹

Still Jackson appeared not to become alarmed. He knew that White had supporters in the state, but he could not conceive of either White or the people of Tennessee voting for an opposition party. Instead of condemning the Senator, he

expressed sympathy for him. For Bell, though, he had only vituperation and scorn, because he was confident that it was Bell's planning and scheming which had seduced the Senator. Only if White could be shaken free from his lethargy and the grip of John Bell's "cunning and management" could he be expected to save himself from utter ruin.²⁰

By the time Congress adjourned in the spring of 1835 the struggle for political possession of Tennessee had reached major proportions. White was in the process of capturing the major newspapers, and even Polk's hometown *Columbia Observer* supported him. The White papers were in agreement that their major task was to prove to the people that White was still a good Jacksonian Democrat, and that it was Jackson who, under the influence of the Little Magician and other Northern and Eastern politicians, had departed from the straight paths of the Democracy. They avoided personal attacks on the Hero, and made no comments which might link them with the rising Whig party. On the other hand, the one Nashville paper which did support the Van Buren candidacy—the *Union*—denied that members of the White-Bell faction were sheep in Jacksonian garments. The editor insisted that White was clearly of the opposition party, and that the White press in Tennessee, falsely proclaiming it was of the Democratic ranks, actually selected most of its copy from the opposition press.²¹

When Bell returned to Nashville from Washington in May, 1835, he was asked by friends to deliver a major address at the city's fashionable Vauxhall Gardens. There in a stirring oration on May 23, he "lighted the torch of revolt against the Democratic party." He strongly defended White's record, and declared that White was an able and deserving friend of Jacksonian Democracy, and had been far more consistent in his support of the Chief's policies than had Van Buren. When he finished the two-hour address none could question his open declaration of war on Jackson's presidential choice. He intended to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to further the cause of Judge White.²²

The cup of sorrow for the Old Chief was becoming filled, and he took it with a grain of bitterness. "How is it that there is no man in the . . . [Democratic] ranks to take the stump, and relieve Tennessee from her degraded attitude of abandoning principle to sustain men who have apostatised [*sic*] from the republican fold for the sake of office?" he asked of Polk. If he were only free to do it, the Chief added, he would set the state upon its Democratic legs once again, and hurl "Mr. Bell, Davy Crockett and Company, . . . from the confidence of the people." Their only object, he believed, was to "destroy" him and his administration and to hand him "down to posterity as an old dotard, ruled by corrupt office holders. . . ." ²³

The Democrats assembled at Baltimore as scheduled and nominated Van Buren, as Jackson had planned. Tennessee cast her fifteen votes for Jackson's choice. The manner in which the votes were cast was ludicrous and it hurt the Jackson-Van Buren cause. As the state had sent no delegation, an obscure specta-

tor, Edmund Rucker of Murfreesboro, was picked from the crowd, seated as the Tennessee "delegation," and permitted to cast all of the state's votes. The White-Bell faction made much fun of the "Ruckerized" convention, and the Jackson men in the state were mortified. The convention method at that time was new, and the people were still in a transitory stage from the old caucus system to the new convention method of selecting candidates. Tennesseans had repudiated the caucus method in 1824 and since that time had placed considerably more emphasis upon "freedom of elections." The highhanded manner in which Jackson made his choice, the fact that the choice was Van Buren instead of White or some other able Southerner, together with the fact that the convention was not a long established method of selecting presidential candidates, caused Tennesseans and people in other states to deprecate the choice of this particular convention and caused them to cast about for other likely candidates.²⁴

Newton Cannon Elected Governor—In the meantime, although national issues tended to obscure local ones, the Jackson forces could not ignore the gubernatorial campaign of 1835 in which Newton Cannon, Jackson's old enemy, had challenged Carroll. As mentioned earlier, Cannon, a person of mediocre talents, was a long time personal and political enemy of the Old General. During the early 1820's he favored Crawford for the presidency; in 1827 he had been an unsuccessful candidate for governor against Houston, who was Jackson's choice; he had flaunted the Chief by championing the United States Bank; and when Jackson had successfully led the Democrats out of the old Republican party, Cannon had become not a Democrat but a National Republican. The White movement was made to order for him. He immediately became a White supporter and was chosen as chairman of a White meeting in Williamson County. His announcement for governor soon followed, and it contained a strongly worded endorsement of White.

Governor Carroll meanwhile permitted the word to circulate that he intended to seek a seventh term. He was once again in the Jackson fold sufficiently to win an endorsement from the Old Hero, and he became the most forthright Van Buren supporter in the state. He originally had talked of contesting Bell's congressional seat but now decided in favor of another try for the governor's chair. He probably would have been elected had it not been for a major constitutional issue involved. He had served as governor from 1821 to 1827, and again from 1829 to 1835. He now sought another consecutive term, although the constitution clearly specified that no person should serve as governor for more than six years in any term of eight. A "new" constitution had been framed, Carroll now argued in reference to the constitutional revision accomplished by the convention of 1834, although in actuality the delegates had only patched some of the rents in the old constitutional fabric and had altered in no way the section stipulating the governor's qualifications and term of office. But Carroll contended that the convention had "abolished the old constitution," and had replaced it with a "new"

one under which he believed himself eligible to serve another three consecutive terms.

Cannon now had several made-to-order issues. He had been defeated in 1827 but had made few enemies among the rank and file of the people, many of whom now looked upon Cannon as being "deserving" of election. He had been among the first to push forward the candidacy of Hugh Lawson White, who certainly was preferable to the Little Magician from New York whose cause Carroll supported actively in his efforts to court the Jackson vote. Cannon spoke out strongly in favor of internal improvements and aid for public schools. The dubious legality of a fourth term, however, became his trump card, and he played it well. As mentioned, he had favored a national bank, and this stand gained for him the support of the rising commercial classes.

The election results were not surprising. Cannon received 41,970 votes, Carroll polled 31,205, and a third candidate, W. H. Humphreys, who also favored White, received 8,054. Cannon's strength had come mainly from East Tennessee, where White was most popular, and from the urban areas, particularly Nashville. The opposition victories did not end with Cannon. The White-Bell party captured the state legislature and elected to the house speakership an outspoken White man, Ephraim H. Foster. The Jackson-Van Buren newspapers claimed that Carroll had been defeated largely on the constitutional issue, but White supporters insisted that the issue had been mainly that of White versus Van Buren.²⁵

These developments in the Volunteer State stung the Old Chief to the quick, and he returned to Washington that autumn grimly determined to crush the incipient White movement and to destroy politically those associated with it. Jackson's lieutenants in Tennessee—Polk, Grundy, and Cave Johnson—were designated as the campaign managers in the "stop-White movement," and attempts were made to win as many as possible back into the fold.

The Old Hero still had an ace or two to play. White's senatorial term would expire in March of 1836, and while he was expected to be reelected, Jackson hoped to embarrass him by having "instruction legislation" enacted which would compel White to vote for the expunging resolution now before the Congress, or else resign. Before the adoption of the Seventeenth Amendment, Senators, of course, were elected by the state legislatures. The legislative bodies from time to time enacted resolutions instructing or advising their Senators to vote for or against controversial legislation in Washington. In this particular case the Jackson men sought to influence the legislature to instruct Senator White to vote in favor of expunging a resolution censuring the Old Chief, which Henry Clay had pushed through the Senate following Jackson's precipitate order causing the removal of funds from the United States Bank shortly after his reelection in 1832. White, although never in favor of the resolution of censure, still believed that once the record was written a legislative body had no constitutional right to "mutilate" it. He could conscientiously vote to "rescind" or "declare null and void" the resolution of censure, but

not to "expunge" it entirely from the record. Such would obliterate it for posterity and take away from those Senators who had voted on the matter the right to vote. To Jackson, however, the resolution was a personal matter and, if permitted to remain, would cast a dark shadow across the integrity of his administration. He believed a great injustice had been done to him, and he could not understand how anyone could do otherwise than vote in favor of Thomas Hart Benton's expunging resolution. Knowing that White disapproved of the proposal, he sought to discredit and embarrass White, and to force him to resign, since it was generally known that the Senator would resign rather than to vote for expunging.* Therefore, when the legislators convened, each received in the mails two copies of the *Washington Globe* which contained Benton's speeches and other articles favoring expunging, and franked "Andrew J.—free." On the day of the election each legislator received three more Jackson-franked copies of the *Globe*. The state press denounced the President for "interfering" in the election, and the action probably did Jackson's cause more harm than good. Joseph C. Guild of Sumner County argued ably for the measure, and Addison A. Anderson of Jefferson County spoke just as competently against it. The die was already cast, however; the measure never got beyond the table.²⁶

Hugh Lawson White Nominated for the Presidency—Even before the vote on the resolution to instruct, the White forces, well entrenched in the legislature, had forced to the floor the question of White's reelection. The Senator was chosen again, and without a dissenting vote. Shortly thereafter, the legislators nominated White for the presidency by a resounding vote of sixty to twelve in the House, and twenty-three to two in the Senate. The resolution of nomination, while indicating general approval of the policies of the "distinguished Chief Magistrate" who was "qualified by his principles, energy and great popularity," still condemned the "tendency to a usurpation of the rights and powers of the people" in the Baltimore Convention, and indirectly struck a blow at the President by making a plea for freedom of elections. The resolution, ingeniously written, was both a commendation and a slap in the face for the Chief Executive.²⁷

Judge White formally accepted the nomination, and Jackson promptly read him and Bell out of the party. "Judge White will not get a vote except in Tennessee . . .," the Old Hero proudly boasted. He probably doubted the truth of his own prediction, but he continued to fight. He spent the summer of 1836 at the Hermitage, and his stay became a political campaign for Van Buren rather than a vacation. At several East Tennessee towns he denounced White in his own bailiwick as a "red hot Federalist." Bell was an "apostate," but Van Buren was the worthiest of successors. Jackson was feted at a barbecue given at the Hermitage

* Several days before the vote was taken, White wrote to a friend to state that he would "leave for home as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements," should the resolution of instruction be passed.

shortly after his arrival, and hundreds of guests heard him again denounce the East Tennessean as a "red hot Federalist." He urged his listeners to remain in the Democratic fold, and expressed confidence that the people of the state would never subscribe to the principles of "federalists," "Whigs," "nullifiers," or "Bank men." The editor of the *Nashville Republican and State Gazette* was "mortified" at the sight of a President conducting himself in such a manner.²⁸

In the meantime the White forces were not idle. They agreed early in the campaign that they must make the chief issue, not one of White versus Jackson, but of White against Van Buren. They would seek to present White, and not the Little Magician, as the true wearer of the mantle of Jacksonian Democracy. They resolved to shun any appearance of adhering to another party, although outside the state generally they were considered as Whigs. On this point White was careful to emphasize that he was not "in the confidence of any party" and stoutly maintained that the only matter of disagreement between him and the President was in Jackson's officious and dictatorial determination to choose Van Buren as his successor.²⁹ Even John Bell denied that he and White were hostile to Jackson, and the editor of the *Republican and State Gazette* was careful to point to the similarities between the Old Chief and White.

The individual voter supports Andrew Jackson because he opposed the tariff [the editor wrote on January 14, 1836], but Judge White opposed the tariff General Jackson opposes internal improvements by the general government, so does Judge White. General Jackson opposes the bank, so does Judge White General Jackson is opposed to nullification, so is Judge White. Now if political principles . . . be the only national ground for the support of any candidate, how is it that the friends of Judge White must be the enemies of Jackson?

Despite Jackson's firm grip, many Tennessee Democrats, whether they realized it or not, were being transferred from the Democratic to the Whig party. Northern Whigs were jubilant, for they saw in White's candidacy an opportunity to take Southern votes away from Van Buren. When Daniel Webster and William Henry Harrison both became Whig candidates they brought dissatisfaction to the Bell-White group and caused them to believe that the Judge's candidacy would receive little support outside of Tennessee. Bell and White became even more zealous in the campaign, however, for a defeat within their home state would bring to both of them political oblivion. Their fears for White outside of the state, as election returns later showed, were not well founded. Disgruntled Democrats were to lead a White movement in Georgia which would enable him to carry that state, and Southern Whigs in general were to claim him as their candidate, despite the fact that he avoided the Whig label.^{*30}

* In addition to carrying Tennessee and Georgia, White received 49.3% of the popular vote in Mississippi; 46.8% in North Carolina; 45% in Alabama; 43.5% in Virginia; 43.1% in Missouri; and 34% in Arkansas.

Neither side put forth much in the way of issues. Jackson men, groaning under the load of Van Buren, tried to emphasize the humiliation which the Old Chief would suffer should Van Buren lose; White's followers poked fun at the New Yorker and struck back at "dictation" without mentioning Old Hickory's name. The strongest argument against supporting White was that his race might prevent any candidate from receiving a majority and would throw the election into the House of Representatives where it was believed a Whig would be chosen. This, some argued, would be worse for Tennesseans than a Jackson-controlled Democrat like Van Buren. The Nashville *Union* presented damaging statistics. White's name would appear on the ballot in only eleven of the twenty-six states; those eleven states had only 133 electoral votes, but 148 votes were necessary for election. Therefore, White's only hope lay in selection by members of the House of Representatives, where Webster and Harrison men predominated. While there was little in the way of basic issues, the candidates did reply to a questionnaire mailed to them by a Kentucky congressman. The Tennessee presidential hopeful replied to the queries as follows: that he did not believe Congress had the power to charter a United States bank; that he did not believe Congress could carry out a system of internal improvements within a state, although Congress could improve navigable streams above and below the ports of entry; that Congress should distribute moneys arising from the sale of government lands; and that Congress could not constitutionally "expunge" the records of an earlier session, but could "rescind" resolutions. In general, he was in agreement with Van Buren on major issues of the day. This served to emphasize even more that this was a contest of personalities in which the "people's choice" was in a race against a "handpicked" candidate.³¹

Shortly before the election Jackson wrote encouraging letters to Van Buren, and assured him that in Tennessee "Bell, White & Co., will be politically destroyed."³² The Old Chief never made a more inaccurate political forecast. White swept the state with a 10,000 majority, winning by a vote of 35,962 to 26,120. Even Old Hickory's Hermitage precinct was in the White fold, 61 to 20. It was a stunning blow to the Democratic party in Tennessee, and especially to the Old Hero himself.* One of his biographers has characterized the election as the "greatest humiliation of his career." He now excoriated White, wrote of him as a "liar" and a "hypocrite," and vowed to expose Bell and White so that all who sought the truth might be free of their contaminating influence, but he could not expunge this record. White carried only one other state—Georgia—but this apparently was little disappointment to him, and he emerged a stronger man politically. An examination of the returns indicates that, despite the fact that it was generally assumed he had little chance for election, he ran strong throughout the state of

* The President was ill at the time of the election and, according to a Washington newspaper, when he heard the news from Tennessee he flew into a rage and ruptured a blood vessel. *United States Telegraph*, November 23, 1836, quoted in Hooper, "Election of 1836," 148.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Monteagle—Assembly Inn

Tennessee. His main strength, however, lay in the eastern and western divisions, where in each section he carried all but three counties. In the Jackson stronghold of Middle Tennessee, where Polk, Grundy, and Cave Johnson waged a hard battle, each candidate carried twelve counties. The victory was more than a personal one for Bell and White, and it was more than a personal defeat for Van Buren and Jackson. While the White forces carefully had avoided the Whig label, the bitterness of the campaign was the birth pangs of the incipient Whigs. For the next twenty years Tennessee was to be a two-party state. The Old Hero, who died nine years later, was not to see his state again in the Democratic fold in a presidential contest.³³

Tennesseans in Texas—While Tennesseans in Washington and at home fought political battles, others in Texas sought to cast aside the Mexican yoke. Tennesseans had been among the first of the Anglo-Americans to migrate to Texas,

but the question of independence or annexation excited little interest in the United States before the Revolution of 1835, except in 1829 when consideration was given to the purchase of the province. Tennesseans became interested in the western land as early as the turn of the century, however, and several were associated with filibustering expeditions while Texas still was Spanish territory.

The Panic of 1819 served as an impetus for a westward movement, as did the termination of the credit system in the disposal of public lands and the curtailment of wildcat banking. The establishment of Mexican independence in 1821 left the Americans free to deal with the new government rather than with the Spanish. Thereupon, Stephen F. Austin in that year negotiated a contract to establish a settlement of three hundred families among which were some Tennesseans. Within the next three years others from the state expressed a desire to lead hundreds of additional families to Texas. Charles Douglas, of Murfreesboro, for example, believed that "3 or 4 hundred respectable families" in his home area might be interested in going, and communicated with Austin about the matter.³⁴ Sterling C. Robertson,* Sam Houston, and others from Davidson County, established a company known as "The Texas Association," and in 1822 petitioned the Mexican government for a grant. Before it was honored Houston became interested in Tennessee politics and withdrew from the movement, but Robertson persisted and finally was able to establish several hundred families in Texas by the time of the Revolution. In the meantime other Tennesseans joined Stephen Austin's colony, and during the six-year period from 1825 to 1831, about one-tenth of the newcomers to the colony were from Tennessee.³⁵

Texas attracted many immigrants to the time of the Revolution. Among those hundreds who migrated from Tennessee, many played important roles in the formation of the Republic. Foremost is the name of Sam Houston.³⁶ It will be recalled that after his unfortunate marriage he had resigned the governorship of the state and had moved west. A few years later he became active in Texas affairs (1833), and served as chairman of the committee which wrote and proposed a Texas constitution. After this he returned to his Indian friends in Arkansas but went to Texas upon learning of the outbreak of hostilities. By November of 1835 he was commander in chief of the Texas forces. The "Buckskin Hero" was successful on the field of battle, and soon became president of the Lone Star Republic. George Campbell Childress probably should rank next to Houston. He had studied law and had been editor of the *National Banner and Nashville Advertiser* for several years before his departure for Texas early in 1836. He applied for a grant in Robertson's colony and became prominent in Texas affairs at once. Later, he was a delegate to the convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos (1836), and wrote the Texas Declaration of Independence, which bears considerable resemblance to Jefferson's document written six decades before.³⁷ Two brothers, William H. and

* Robertson was a grandson of General James Robertson.

John A. Wharton, migrated several years before Childress. The former was a close friend of Austin but the two split over the chairmanship of the Convention of San Felipe in 1832. In 1836 Wharton and Austin visited Nashville, New Orleans, New York, Richmond, Philadelphia, and other American cities to seek aid for the new republic. John A. was editor of a paper called *The Advocate of the People's Rights*, and was otherwise prominent.³⁸ An active Tennessee minister who joined the Texas group was Sumner Bacon. He had come from Massachusetts into Tennessee and Arkansas, and was ordained by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, a newly organized frontier denomination which was to play an important religious role in Texas history. With "Yankee energy and Cumberland Presbyterian zeal," he joined Stephen Austin and advised him upon religious matters. He held the first camp meeting ever conducted in Texas, and sought to improve conditions among both Catholics and Protestants.³⁹

The Anglo-Americans who went to Texas found fertile and productive soil, but a government and a people whose ideals and principles were different from the theories of freedom and individual liberty to which they had become accustomed. As mentioned, in the same year Austin led his settlers westward the Mexican people gained their independence and began the difficult task of transforming the former Spanish viceroyalty into a federal republic. Unlike the Americans, they had had little opportunity for acquiring political wisdom and experience or of developing initiative and resourcefulness, since Mexican frontier conditions had been quite different from those of the United States. A complex constitution was written in 1824, but inadequate provisions were made for local control and maintenance of order. In addition to the matter of government, the colonists also became disturbed over the recurring indications of Mexican opposition to slavery, and the religious requirement that all settlers in Texas must become Catholics. The apprehensions of some people over the religious question are indicated by the concern shown by the Reverend John M. Holland, of West Tennessee, who in the spring of 1835 made a trip to Texas for the purpose of examining the religious conditions of the western province. Mexicans also became troubled over the general attitude of the Americans in Texas, and especially over their reluctance to profess Catholicism and over their occasional talk of Texas annexation to the United States.⁴⁰

The rank and file of Texans, however, were loyal to the Mexican government until 1835. This is evident in the role played by Austin and others in the abortive Fredonian uprising. In 1826, Benjamin Edwards, with less than a score of men, rode into Nacogdoches, seized the stone fort there, and proclaimed the Republic of Fredonia. Austin and almost all of the other Americans evidenced no interest in the affair, and Austin even raised troops to assist the Mexican authorities in suppressing it. Interestingly, as late as 1832 Austin could write, "My standing motto—'Fidelity to Mexico'—ought to be in every man's mouth and repeated . . ." ⁴¹ The Mexican government misinterpreted the Edwards movement, how-

ever, and accepted it as additional evidence of the Yankees' reckless ambition as well as a need for a more cautious policy with respect to the Americans. Other matters, including a boundary dispute, American interest in the purchase of Texas, and continual disagreements between the Americans and the natives, aggravated the matter. Four years after the Fredonian movement the Mexicans enacted the famous Colonization Law of 1830, which forbade further immigration into Texas from the United States, prohibited the further introduction of slaves, and provided for the garrisoning of convict soldiers within the province in order to insure the enforcement of Mexican laws. Conventions were held in 1832 and 1833, in which Houston, Austin, and others prepared a provisional constitution, asked for the repeal of the immigration ban, and chose Austin to present these demands before the Mexican officials. The government acquiesced only in the request to repeal the ban on immigration, and arrested and imprisoned Austin shortly after his presentation of the proposals. Trouble continued, and actual hostilities began October 2, 1835, when at Gonzales a Mexican colonel's demand for the surrender of a Texan-held cannon resulted in a skirmish. Sam Houston subsequently was made commander in chief of the army.⁴²

Tennesseans witnessed these events with considerable concern. Shortly after news was received of the outbreak, meetings were held over the state designed to arouse interest in helping the Texans. On November 14, 1835, a Nashville paper called upon interested citizens to convene at the courthouse for the purpose of encouraging young men to volunteer their services for the cause. When the meeting was held resolutions were proposed and adopted pledging financial support, and young men volunteered their services. One prominent Nashville merchant gave five thousand dollars immediately for the maintenance of the provisional government, and later pledged to buy fifty thousand dollars of Texas notes. A few days after the meeting the editor of the Nashville *Union* could observe that

Much public spirit, and much liberality has been evinced by our fellow citizens . . . in the cause of the people of Texas . . . Hundreds of . . . patriotic citizens have . . . dealt out their means freely . . . When liberty is invaded in any country, it is only necessary to point out to Tennesseans, the way in which they can render service to the oppressed, and the work is done . . .⁴³

Shortly thereafter the Nashville *Republican* urged the unemployed and the young to hasten to the defense of Tennesseans in Texas. "Go!" the editor urged,

and the rifle of heroism of Tennessee may, in the cause of Liberty and Texas, add yet another laurel to that unfading chaplet so gallantly won in the wilds of Alabama and on the plains of New Orleans.⁴⁴

Hundreds departed immediately by land and sea to shoulder arms in the cause of Texas liberty. General Richard G. Dunlap boasted that he would raise a force of from two to five thousand men provided he could retain his general

rank, and provided Texas would furnish the transportation. Texas authorities urged him to proceed. Early in the following year the ill-fated David Crockett arrived with a few friends to join "the volunteers from the United States." Thomas J. Hardeman, James K. Polk's great-uncle, had secured a grant of land by this time, and urged his nephew to aid in the Texas cause, "as all true Americans should do" The cause was aided considerably early in 1836 by the appearance of Austin, Wharton, and Branch T. Archer, who came to Tennessee to seek aid. They had come directly to Nashville from New Orleans, where they reported that bankers and other citizens of that city had agreed to lend the provisional government \$250,000. In mid-February they were scheduled to address Middle Tennesseans at the Davidson County courthouse, but the building would not accommodate the crowd, and they were forced to move to the nearby courthouse lawn and square. Meetings where equal enthusiasm was manifested were held in other towns. In Jackson, for example, a "large crowd" adopted resolutions of "enthusiastic character," and subscribed \$700 for the cause of liberty.⁴⁵

The fact that armed bands were leaving Tennessee and other states to fight in the cause for Texas independence brought bitter complaints from the Mexican chargé d'affaires that the Jackson administration was lax in its attempts to maintain neutrality. Finally, at the insistence of Santa Anna, the Mexican government drafted a circular in which it threatened to punish as pirates all armed foreigners entering Texas. Men from the Volunteer state were not intimidated by the threats, however, and continued to participate actively in the cause.⁴⁶

In the meantime the Texans were meeting with success on the field of battle. On April 21, Houston defeated and captured Santa Anna at San Jacinto. The Mexican leader was held prisoner for a short while, but soon was released on condition that he would withdraw his troops and use his influence to secure Mexican recognition of Texan independence. The Mexican Congress refused to accept the arrangement, but was unable again to impose its authority over Texas; thus, at San Jacinto Texas gained virtual independence. Major General Edmund P. Gaines, in command of the frontier division of the United States army, now ordered suspension of recruiting activities, and Tennesseans reluctantly complied. The interest in Texas did not subside, however. In June, 1836, a public meeting was held at the Davidson County courthouse to consider sending food, clothing, and other relief to destitute Texans, and meetings were held in other cities and towns for discussions of Texas independence and the possibility of aid in case of another Mexican invasion, which some people feared might soon take place. John A. Rogers, of Rogersville, wrote Austin to advise that "thirty or forty thousand" men would volunteer to repel the invader should he attack again. Tennesseans now had appointed themselves personal guardians of Texas liberty and independence, and stood ready to strike when the need arose.⁴⁷

Many Tennesseans gave their lives in the cause for Texas independence, but none was better known or loved than David Crockett. As mentioned earlier,

Davy, somewhat of a drifter, lived from time to time in various parts of the state. He became a bitter enemy of Andrew Jackson,* and served in Congress off and on to 1835. In that year he was defeated in his bid for reelection and, according to one story, advised his erstwhile constituents that they could "go to hell," but that he "would go to Texas." Accompanied by a small party, he departed in December, 1835, and by January 9, 1836, had reached San Augustine. There he enrolled as a volunteer, and wrote his daughter in Gibson County that he would not exchange Texas—the "garden spot of the world"—for a permanent seat in the United States Congress. He also wrote that he would "set out" immediately for the Rio Grande to join other volunteers, and by early February he was in the vicinity of the old Alamo mission church where he met his death. Drama and fiction have been kind to the "King of the Wild Frontier." Some writers have pictured him standing at the Alamo doors slaying and holding off regiments of Mexican soldiers; others have shown him among the last half dozen survivors who surrendered only to be murdered by the cruel Santa Anna—but not until Crockett had lunged with drawn knife at the Mexican general only to be cut down by Mexican bayonets just short of his target. He joined Colonel William B. Travis at the Alamo in February, 1836, where the latter was



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

David Crockett

determined to remain, despite Houston's orders that he destroy the stronghold and retreat. By the end of February the old mission had been surrounded, and Travis, realizing his plight, cast about for aid. None came, and on March 6 Santa Anna took the fort, only sparing the lives of a few women. Various accounts differ as to the size of the fighting force on each side, but a safe estimate seems to be that Travis had only about 150 effective fighting men, while Santa Anna had several thousand. About five or six men did surrender but

* One author has written that "David's hate for Andrew Jackson was his undoing. The tragic drama of his life must be understood in terms of that weakness." James Atkins Shackford, *David Crockett, the Man and the Legend* (Edited by John B. Shackford, Chapel Hill, 1956), 227.

Santa Anna refused to spare them. All of the details concerning the last hours of the brave defenders will never be known; however, there appears to be some reason to believe that Crockett was not among the last to fall. He may have been among the first to die, for one author recently has claimed that he died outside the fort, unarmed, apparently going on a mission which made him oblivious of danger. If the Frontier King was not among the last survivors, slaying scores of hapless Mexicans on all sides, it should not detract from his glory. He was one of Tennessee's great fighting men—a person of indomitable bravery and intrepid courage, whose very being was dedicated to the frontier ideal of liberty and freedom.⁴⁸

In Washington President Jackson pursued a policy of "watchful waiting" with regard to the debutante republic. Earlier, he had been interested in the purchase or annexation of the province, but once the revolution began he sought to pursue a policy of strict neutrality. In view of the strong pro-Texan sentiment, however, it was almost impossible to adhere to the letter of neutral obligations, and during the war there was considerable official laxness. Little or no effort was made to check enlistments and expeditions, and little cooperation was shown in correspondence with the Mexican government regarding its complaints. Many Mexicans believed that the United States government actually was encouraging intervention in hope of achieving annexation, and would grant the new republic recognition at once. As late as December, 1836, however—eight months after the Battle of San Jacinto—President Jackson still was not ready to recognize Texas. Other Tennesseans in Washington disagreed, however. Representative John Bell earlier had presented a memorial from a large Nashville delegation requesting Congress to grant recognition, and Hugh Lawson White had presented the same memorial in the Senate. White, in addressing the Senate on the matter, expressed the hope that the new republic had achieved "permanent" independence.⁴⁹

By early 1837 President Jackson had changed his mind with regard to recognition. On the last day of his term he appointed a chargé d'affaires to Texas and received a Texan minister. Congress, in the meantime, had acted on Bell's move to vote funds for a diplomatic representative, who arrived soon to assure Washington officials that another invasion of Texas was impossible.⁵⁰ Already annexation was favored in both countries, and the people of Texas had expressed their desire for accession to the United States in a plebiscite held soon after the battle of San Jacinto. This matter will be discussed in a later chapter.

Supreme Court Established—While the Texas Revolution and the revolt against Jackson overshadowed everything else during Newton Cannon's first term, at least one important law, enacted in December, 1835, should be discussed. This measure established a "Supreme Court" in accordance with the constitutional provision of 1835. The legislators were in agreement that the judicial body should

be composed of three members. In order that all sections of the state might be equally represented, the lawmakers provided that not more than one justice should come from any one of the three grand divisions of the state. The salary was fixed at \$1800 per annum, and the term was set at twelve years. Four days after the enactment of the measure the legislators held a joint session for the purpose of choosing court members. William B. Turley was chosen for the Western division, and William B. Reese was chosen for the Eastern division, neither having opposition. From Middle Tennessee Judge John Catron and Chancellor Nathan Green were candidates, and Green was chosen.⁵¹

Cannon Reelected Governor—As mentioned earlier, the White-Bell forces had avoided the Whig label in 1836, but within a year it was evident that they were assuming the principles of that party. Not until 1839 did White reluctantly admit the Whig classification, although others by that time had embraced the new party* both in name and in principle. From the beginning there had been no hesitancy on the part of Governor Cannon, however, who boldly announced for reelection in 1837 on the Whig ticket.⁵²

Cannon had a ready-made issue in 1837; he blamed the panic of that year upon Jackson and the Democrats. Hard times struck fiercely at both the agricultural and commercial classes, and cotton which had reached twenty-six cents per pound in 1836 was quoted later on the New Orleans market at between one and three cents. Many merchants and farmers who had enjoyed prosperity** in 1836 were thrown into bankruptcy. The Jackson forces searched for a candidate to oppose Cannon. The names of several military men were presented. A group of "West Tennesseans" suggested Major Andrew L. Martin, a group in Perry County recommended General Alexander B. Bradford, and others spoke favorably of General Edmund Pendleton Gaines. Carroll was a logical choice, but he refused to accept after a disagreement with Van Buren over a diplomatic post. General Robert Armstrong, a true Jacksonian who had led Tennessee volunteers in the Seminole skirmishes, received the Jackson nod after Polk, Judge John Catron, and other Van Buren men failed to find a more favorable candidate. The military leader was a poor campaigner, however, and Catron's earlier evaluation of him that he "cannot speak, and is radically defective in intelligence," apparently had a degree of truth in it. Cannon was reelected by a majority of over 17,000, and the Whigs again captured control of both houses of the legislature. In West

* The editor of the *Nashville Union* (March 30, 1837) chided the opposition press which, since White's election, had gone over "horse, foot, and dragoons to the Whig party."

** In October, 1836, Governor Cannon had told legislators, "At no period have the Representatives of the people of Tennessee been assembled when the aspect of our state presented evidence of [such] public prosperity and individual happiness." *House Journal*, 1836, p. 8.

Tennessee the congressional candidacy of young John Wesley Crockett, Davy's son, was an important factor in causing the Jackson stalwart, Adam Huntsman, to withdraw. Crockett was elected by a large majority over his only opponent, A. M. Hughes.⁵³

The Panic of 1837 caused economic issues to loom large during the Williamson Countian's second administration. The depression put a stop, temporarily, to further internal improvements, which caused some people to place the blame for it upon the governor. Confusion, which is often found in legislative assemblies during times of financial distress, engulfed the Twenty-second General Assembly in Tennessee. At least six factions, each espousing one or more of the following improvements, could be discerned: construction of a central railroad entirely at state expense, railroads financed with liberal state aid, macadamized turnpikes at state expense, river improvements at state expense, state appropriations for a common school system, and a state bank.⁵⁴

In order to relieve debtors, and to satisfy all factions, the Whigs decided upon the establishment of a state bank with broad powers. It will be recalled that the legislature had chartered the Planters' Bank and the Union Bank in Nashville, and the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank in Memphis, after Jackson vetoed the bill rechartering the United States Bank. These financial institutions, and others over the state, were near collapse and had suspended specie payments by January, 1838. Therefore, the legislature then chartered a new bank with a capital stock of \$5,000,000 with the state as the sole stockholder. The bank was to consist of one parent bank and seven branches. Warm interest was manifested in the towns and cities of the state, as many of them sought to be chosen as one of the seven. The directors of the principal bank were authorized to make the choices, and in their report to the legislature in 1839 they announced that they had designated Rogersville, Athens, Shelbyville, Clarksville, Columbia, Trenton, and Somerville as the repositories for the state funds.* The chartering law further required the bank annually to set aside from its profits \$100,000 for use of the common schools and \$18,000 for the academies. Also, internal improvement bonds amounting to \$4,000,000 were to be issued, and the proceeds used to subscribe for fifty percent of stock in the various railroad and turnpike companies, and to aid river improvement. This sweeping "new deal" legislation consolidated the commercial classes and relieved for a time the pressure on the Whigs and the Governor.⁵⁵

Cannon and the Whig legislature were embarrassed by the fact that the state's Senators in Washington were Democrats. Legislators first turned the full impact of their strength against Senator Grundy, whose term expired in 1839.

* By the time of this measure, most of the banks had suspended the issuance of specie. Specie payments were resumed in January, 1839, but were again suspended in October of that year. Probably the only one in the state which did not suspend payments during the panic was the Southwestern Railroad Bank of Knoxville, which was headed by Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey.

Not content to wait until that time for action, they decided upon a bold course. They would hold the election in 1837 so that they might be assured of a Whig replacement when Grundy's term did expire. Accordingly, an election was scheduled for December 21, and the Whigs nominated Ephraim H. Foster, of Nashville, after they had conferred with John Bell, who chose to remain in the House rather than to replace Grundy. Foster at one time had been Jackson's private secretary and close friend. However, Jackson's support of John Eaton in the senatorial race of 1833, which finally was won by Grundy after Foster had thrown his support to him, embittered Foster against the Old Chief. Two years later he had been chosen speaker of the state house of representatives. Grundy, in anticipation of defeat, refused to run, and the Democrats selected Carroll as their candidate. Foster was elected by a vote of sixty-five to thirty-three.⁵⁶

Grundy's friends were furious, but the Whig legislators had more in store for the Nashville lawyer and statesman. They passed a resolution instructing him to vote against the Van Buren-sponsored sub-treasury plan then before Congress, in the belief that he would resign rather than comply. He obeyed the instruction, however, and his refusal to resign was a keen disappointment to the Whigs, who wanted to replace him immediately with Foster. In the following August he did resign to accept a post in Van Buren's Cabinet, and Foster was appointed to fill out the unexpired term.⁵⁷

The period 1835-1839 was a stormy one in the realm of Tennessee politics. The Whig party had been established, not as a segment of the national Whig party originally, but as an opposition group which followed Bell and White. The group gained momentum with the election of 1836, enhanced its power and increased its membership with the election of 1837, and by 1839 had gained strength equal to that of its rival. By the latter date the political map of the state had begun to jell, and party members continued to remain loyal through the election of 1852. Of the sixty-five counties making returns in 1836, fifty-three continued to support the same party for the next sixteen years. Of the remaining twelve, six supported White in 1836 but voted for the Democratic candidates thereafter. The remaining six wavered from one party to the other.⁵⁸

Shortly after the election of 1836 a West Tennessee newspaper editor described the campaign as having been a contest between the rural folk and the urban dwellers. The Whigs were said to have been largely of the wealthy city group, with some of the planter class scattered among the rural population; the Democrats were thought to be mainly of the poor, agrarian group. The tendency among writers has been to apply that interpretation to the two parties during the entire twenty years of Whig-Democratic competition, and especially to emphasize the concept that the Whigs were a class group of aristocrats who distrusted "that scene of wild impulse, and . . . pure democracy." More recent studies, however, have modified this point of view and have shown that, while large planter and commercial interests may have been exceedingly strong they did not dominate

the party to the exclusion of all others.* No full and complete study has been made of this aspect of the Tennessee Whigs; however, it is not improbable that the state picture should be in line for modification.⁵⁹

For two decades following the contest of 1836 Tennesseans were to witness and to participate in a period of "partisan fury," the like of which they had never seen before.

* For recent modified points of view see especially Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "Who Were the Southern Whigs?," *American Historical Review*, LIX (January, 1954), 341-46; and Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama?," *Journal of Southern History*, XXIII (November, 1954), 510-22. The latter writer concludes that in Alabama "the Whigs were no more exclusively the 'silk stocking' party . . . than the Democracy was exclusively the party of the 'common man.'"

CHAPTER XVII—NOTES

Able scholars have written on the Whigs in general, the Southern Whigs as a sectional group, and the Tennessee Whigs in particular, with special reference to the revolt against Jackson. One of the first accounts of party development dealt with the Southern Whigs, and appeared in 1911. It was an essay by U. B. Phillips, entitled "The Southern Whigs, 1834-1854," in *Essays in American History Dedicated to Frederick Jackson Turner* (New York), 203-09. Two years later appeared Arthur C. Cole's scholarly *The Whig Party in the South* (Washington, 1913). A decade later, E. Malcolm Carroll published his *Origins of the Whig Party* (Durham, 1925), a doctoral dissertation at Duke University, but he relied considerably upon Cole's able study for chapters on the Southern Whigs. Several studies have been made on the career of John Bell, the first Whig of prominence in Tennessee. Among them are: Joseph Howard Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee* (Baton Rouge, 1950), Norman L. Parks, "The Career of John Bell of Tennessee in the United States House of Representatives" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1942); "The Career of John Bell as Congressman from Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (September, 1942), 229-49; A. V. Goodpasture, "John Bell's Political Revolt, and His Vauxhall Garden Speech," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (December, 1916), 254-63; and Joshua W. Caldwell, "John Bell of Tennessee: A Chapter of Political History," *American Historical Review*, IV (July, 1899), 652-64.

Lunia Paul Gresham has developed several articles on Hugh Lawson White from his Vanderbilt dissertation, "The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," (1943), including: "Hugh Lawson White as a Tennessee Politician and Banker, 1807-1827," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 18 (1946), 25-46; "Hugh Lawson White: Frontiersman, Lawyer, and Judge," *ibid.*, No. 19 (1947), 3-24; and "The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III (December, 1944), 291-318. Clement L. Grant's Vanderbilt dissertation, "The Public Career of Cave Johnson" (1951), has been summarized in "The Public

Career of Cave Johnson," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (September, 1951), 195-223. Charles Grier Sellers, Jr. published in 1957 the first volume of a definitive work on Polk. His *James K. Polk, Jacksonian*, 1795-1843 (Princeton, 1957), is indispensable for a study of the period.

Powell Moore wrote on "The Establishment of the Whig Party in Tennessee" as a Ph.D. dissertation at Indiana University (1932). From this able study he has developed several indispensable articles. His "The Political Background of the Revolt against Jackson in Tennessee" was published in *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 4 (1932), 45-66; four years later he published "The Revolt against Jackson in Tennessee" in *Journal of Southern History*, II (August, 1936), 335-59. Charles E. Pool, in "The Rise of the Whig Party in West Tennessee, 1834-1843" (M. A. thesis, University of Mississippi, 1950), develops the revolt against Jackson in that section of the state, and Ernest W. Hooper's "The Presidential Election of 1836 in Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, University of North Carolina, 1949), carefully analyzes the White-Van Buren contest.

Additional useful studies are cited in the footnotes.

1. Albert Somit, "Andrew Jackson: Legend and Reality," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VII (December, 1948), 310-13; Bassett, *Andrew Jackson*, II, 380.
2. Frances Clifton, "John Overton as Andrew Jackson's Friend," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (March, 1952), 23; Louis R. Harlan, "Public Career of William Berkeley Lewis," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VII (March, 1948), 14-15.
3. Sellers, "Jackson Men with Feet of Clay," 538; *House Journal*, 1823, p. 77; Leota Driver Maiden, "Colonel John Williams," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 30 (1958) 7-46; Samuel C. Williams, "Brigadier-General Nathaniel Taylor," *ibid.*, No. 12 (1940), 34-36.
4. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 293; "Andrew Jackson and the Rise of Southwestern Democracy," *American Historical Review*, XXXIII (October, 1927), 64-77; John Spencer Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson* (7 vols., Washington, 1926-1935), II, 430, 437, 438; *Nashville Whig*, July 31, 1819; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 272; *Cong. Debates*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 1338-39, 1810, 1897; David Crockett, *David Crockett's Own Story, As Written by Himself* (New York, 1955), 233-35; Folmsbee and Catron, "David Crockett: Congressman," *passim*; Sellers, *Polk*, 91; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 47; James Phelan, *History of Tennessee; The Making of a State* (Boston, 1889), 358-59; William Nisbet Chambers, *Old Bullion Benton, Senator from the New West* (Boston, 1956), 35-37; Sellers, "Jackson Men with Feet of Clay," 537-551.
5. See Sellers, "Jackson Men with Feet of Clay," *passim*.
6. N. L. Parks, "John Bell as Congressman," 231; *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, August 16, 1826 (Grundy), and August 26, 1826 (Bell); Joseph H. Parks, *Felix Grundy, Champion of Democracy* (University, Louisiana, 1940), 173; *John Bell*, 17-21.
7. Gresham "Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," 294, 308; *Senate Journal* 1801, pp. 11, 33; John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Autobiography of Martin Van Buren, Annual Report*, American Historical Association, 1918 (Washington, 1920), II, 341; Sellers, *Polk*, 139.

8. Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 45-46; see also James, *The Raven*, 67-85, for an account of the Houston-Carroll contest.
9. Parks, *John Bell*, 67; *Felix Grundy*, *passim*., especially Chapter IX; Folmsbee and Catron, "David Crockett: Congressman," *passim*.
10. See Jackson's letter to Lewis lamenting Grundy's death, in Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 66; also, Clifton, "John Overton," 39-40.
11. James Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols., New York, 1860), III, 383; *National Banner and Nashville Daily Advertiser*, March 29, April 3, 1833; N. L. Parks, "John Bell as Congressman," 236; Sellers, *Polk*, 197.
12. For an able discussion of the Polk-Bell contest, see Chapter 8 of Sellers, *Polk*, 234-66; also J. H. Parks, *John Bell*, 70-71.
13. Jackson to Van Buren, Aug. 8, 16, 1834, in Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 281-82.
14. N. L. Parks, "John Bell as Congressman," 239; J. H. Parks, *John Bell*, 75-77.
15. *Ibid.*, 78-79.
16. *Congressional Debates*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., IX, 1676, 1678; Jackson to J. C. Guild, Apr. 24, 1835, Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 282, 338-41. Guild was an active supporter of Jackson. For his speech before the state legislature in praise of Jackson after the Hero was censured by the United States Senate, see White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 10-18.
17. Caldwell, "John Bell of Tennessee," 652-64; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 338; Sellers, *Polk*, 254-55.
18. Gresham, "Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," 302-03; Jackson to Grundy, Feb. 13, 1833, *American Historical Magazine* (April, 1900), V, 137.
19. Scott (ed.), *Memoir of Hugh Lawson White*, 348-49; Gresham, "Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," 310; Grant, "The Public Career of Cave Johnson," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (September, 1951), 202-04; Sellers, *Polk*, 261; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 301; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 335-59; Robert Cassell, "Newton Cannon and State Politics, 1835-1839," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XV (December, 1956), 307; Eugene I. McCormac, *James K. Polk, A Political Biography* (Berkeley, 1922), 84.
20. Parks, *John Bell*, 92; Jackson to Guild, Apr. 24, 1835, Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 338-41.
21. *Nashville Union*, April 24, 27, 1835.
22. Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 342; Goodpasture, "John Bell's Vauxhall Gardens Speech," 260; Parks, *John Bell*, 93.
23. Jackson to Polk, May 12, 1835, in Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 345-46; Jackson to Andrew J. Hutchings, June 30, 1835, *ibid.*, V, 554-55. The date is erroneously published as 1838 instead of 1835. See Parks, *John Bell*, 108, note 24.
24. Sellers, *Polk*, 273; Parks, *John Bell*, 108.
25. Sellers, *Polk*, 273; Cassell, "Newton Cannon," 308-09; Thomas P. Abernethy, "The Origin of the Whig Party in Tennessee," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XII (March, 1926), 509.
26. *Congressional Debates*, 23 Cong., 2 Sess., pt. 1, 723; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 344.
27. *House Journal*, 1835-1836, pp. 67-68; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 345; Grant, "Cave Johnson," 203-04; Sellers, *Polk*, 289-290; Parks *John Bell*, 111-112; Scott (ed.), *Memoir of Hugh Lawson White*, 344-45.
28. *Nashville Republican and State Gazette*, Sept. 13, 1836; *Nashville Union*, Sept. 24, 1836; Jackson to Hutchings, Oct. 31, 1835, Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence*

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29. Scott (ed.), *Memoir of Hugh Lawson White*, 156, 344.
 30. Thomas B. Alexander, *Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee* (Nashville, 1956), 20; Parks, *John Bell*, 121; Sellers, *Polk*, 266; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 349; Carroll, *Whig Party*, 127-28; Cole, *Whig Party in South*, 39-44.
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 32. Quoted in Parks, *John Bell*, 131.
 33. Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 356; Parks, *John Bell*, 131; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 308; Grant, "Cave Johnson," 204; Sellers, *Polk*, 302; *Republican Banner*, Sept. 2, 1837; Claude G. Bowers, *The Party Battles of the Jackson Period* (Boston, 1922), 453. For a careful analysis of the election returns see Hooper, "Presidential Election of 1836," pp. 145-52. *Nashville Republican and State Gazette*, November 24, 1836.
 34. William C. Binkley, *The Texas Revolution* (Baton Rouge, 1952), 2; Robert F. Karsch, "Tennessee's Interest in the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836" (M. A. Thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1934), 3-6; "Tennessee's Interest in the Texas Revolution," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series 2, III (January, 1937), 207-08; Joseph H. Hawkins to Austin, Feb. 6, 1824, in Eugene C. Barker (ed.), *The Austin Papers*, (3 vols., Washington and Austin, 1924-1928), I, 476; Douglas to Austin, Feb. 26, 1824, *ibid.*, I, 745-46.
 35. Eugene C. Barker, "Notes on the Colonization of Texas," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, X (September, 1923), 149.
 36. Much has been written of the "Buckskin Hero of Tennessee," including Marquis James, *The Raven*, but perhaps the best account is Friend, *Sam Houston*.
 37. James K. Greer, "The Committee on the Texan Declaration of Independence," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXX (April, 1927), 245-51; Karsch, "Interest in Texas Revolution" (article), 227. See also Cornelia Hood, "The Life and Career of George Campbell Childress" (M. A. thesis, University of Texas, 1938), *passim*.
 38. Karsch, "Interest in Texas Revolution" (article), 212, 227. See also, Rosa Bell Wilson, "The Mission of Austin, Archer, and Wharton to the United States in 1836" (M. A. Thesis, University of Texas, 1937), *passim*.
 39. B. W. McDonnold, *History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church* (Nashville, 1899), 263-65; William Stuart Red, *The Texas Colonist and Religion, 1821-1836*, (Austin, 1924), 135-36, 139.
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 41. Ray Billington, *Westward Expansion* (New York, 1949), 491; Rupert N. Richardson, *Texas, The Lone Star State* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1943), 99.
 42. Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 493; Binkley, *Texas Revolution*, 6.
 43. November 24, 1835.
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 45. Eugene C. Barker, "The United States and Mexico, 1835-1837," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I (June, 1914), 4-7; "The Finances of the Texas Revolution," *Political Science Quarterly*, XIX (December, 1904), 627; Sellers, *Polk*, 336-37; *Nashville Republican*, February 4 (arrival of Wharton), February 9 (arrival of Archer and Austin), April 19, 1836.

46. George L. Rives, *The United States and Mexico* (2 vols., New York, 1913), I, 322; Cassell, "Newton Cannon," 313-14; Eugene C. Barker, "President Jackson and the Texas Revolution," *American Historical Review*, XII (July, 1907), 804.
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48. Information on Crockett is taken from the following: Shackford, *David Crockett*, 212, 216, 224, 227, 235, 238; James D. Davis, *The History of the City of Memphis* (Memphis, 1873), 143; Crockett, *Crockett's Own Story*, 375; Stanley Siegel, *A Political History of the Texas Republic, 1836-1845* (Austin, 1946), 30; Stanley J. Folmsbee and Anna Grace Catron, "David Crockett: Congressman," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 29 (1957), 78; "David Crockett in Texas," *ibid.*, No. 30, (1958), 48-74. For an excellent account of Crockett's early career, see same authors' "The Early Career of David Crockett," *ibid.*, No. 28 (1956), 58-85.
49. Barker, "Jackson and Texas Revolution," 809; same author, "United States and Mexico," 29-30; Nashville *Republican*, July 9, 1836; Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, V, 416-18; Sarah Brown McNeill, "Andrew Jackson and Texas Affairs, 1819-1836," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 28 (1956), 86-101.
50. Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 499.
51. White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 56-57; *Public Acts*, 1835, Chap. 23, pp. 110-14.
52. Nashville *Union*, March 30, 1837; Nashville *Whig*, February 7, 1838; Moore, "Revolt Against Jackson," 354; Abernethy, "Whig Party in Tennessee," 511.
53. Chase C. Mooney, "The Political Career of Adam Huntsman," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (June, 1951), 123; Cartter Patten, *A Tennessee Chronicle* (Chattanooga, 1953), 128; Cassell, "Newton Cannon," 313-15; Alexander, *Thomas A. R. Nelson*, 20.
54. Stanley J. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845* (Knoxville, 1939), 153-63; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 181.
55. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 169-70; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 300-302; Cassell, "Newton Cannon," 317; Sellers, *Polk*, 345; First Report of the Bank of Tennessee, in *House Journal*, 1839, Appendix, 845-46; William B. Hesseltine (ed.), *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters* (Nashville, 1954), 24; Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Beginnings of the Railroad Movement East Tennessee," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 97; Claude A. Campbell, "Banking and Finance in Tennessee During the Depression of 1837," *ibid.*, No. 9 (1937), 19, 25.
56. Arda S. Walker, "John Henry Eaton, Apostate," in *ibid.*, No. 24 (1952), 35; Pool, "Whig Party in West Tennessee," 56; *Senate Journal*, 1837, p. 383; Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 312-13; N. L. Parks, "John Bell as Congressman," 246-47; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 179.
57. Parks, *Felix Grundy*, 313-14.
58. Hooper, "Election of 1836," 145-52.
59. *Ibid.*, 148; Phillips, "Southern Whigs," 215, and Cole, *Whig Party in South*, set a pattern of class interpretation which other writers have followed. See also, Robert G. Gunderson, *The Log-Cabin Campaign* (Lexington, 1857), 187; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 303. For modifications of the earlier point of view see Paul Murray, *The Whig Party in Georgia, 1825-1853* (Chapel Hill, 1948), 2-3; Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party," 510-22; Sellers, "Who Were the Southern Whigs," 341-46; and Thomas B. Alexander, "Thomas A. R. Nelson as an Example of Whig Conservatism," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XV (March, 1956), 17-29.

CHAPTER XVIII

Party Politics, 1839-1849

THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION of 1835 was a knife thrust at the heart of the Democratic party in Tennessee, and the losses of 1836 and 1837 were as salt rubbed in raw wounds. So disorganized was the Jackson party and so discouraged were its leaders that some seriously considered leaving the state. Cave Johnson, the Jackson stalwart from Clarksville was so perturbed over Democratic losses, which included his congressional seat, that he considered moving to Mississippi. The Old Hero, in humiliation, retired to the Hermitage where he bitterly assailed the people's "damnable apostacy." Felix Grundy, Johnson, and other lieutenants were discredited, and only James Knox Polk, Speaker of the national House of Representatives, emerged from the ordeal unscathed. Party leaders, including the Elder Statesman of the Hermitage, looked to the Maury Countian as the only one who might rescue the Democracy from the doldrums.¹

Polk Elected Governor—Shortly after the election of 1837, less disheartened Democrats began to lay plans for wresting the gubernatorial chair from the hands of their opponents two years hence. Polk began the movement and thoroughly reorganized the party down to the county and precinct level. During the congressional recess in late October, 1837, he hastened to Nashville where he met a large conclave of party leaders. There he declared war on Henry Clay and "modern Whiggery" and called upon all loyal Democrats to follow him. The Maury Countian obviously was floating a trial balloon for his own gubernatorial candidacy, and only William Carroll appeared to be a serious obstacle.

As observed earlier, former Governor Carroll had been defeated in his bid for a seventh gubernatorial term in 1835, but he still remained a potent force in the Democratic party. His name had been placed in the masthead of the *Shelbyville Star* as early as March 15, 1838, but it was clearly evident that the Old Hero, Cave Johnson, the editors of the leading Democratic newspapers and other party leaders saw only Polk as their party's redeemer. Polk was fearful lest a disastrous split should occur, but fortunately Carroll was removed as an obstacle when in the summer of 1838 he accepted a federal appointment from President Van Buren. On August 30, 1838, at a dinner given in Murfreesboro in his honor, Polk announced his candidacy before an audience of some two thousand people.

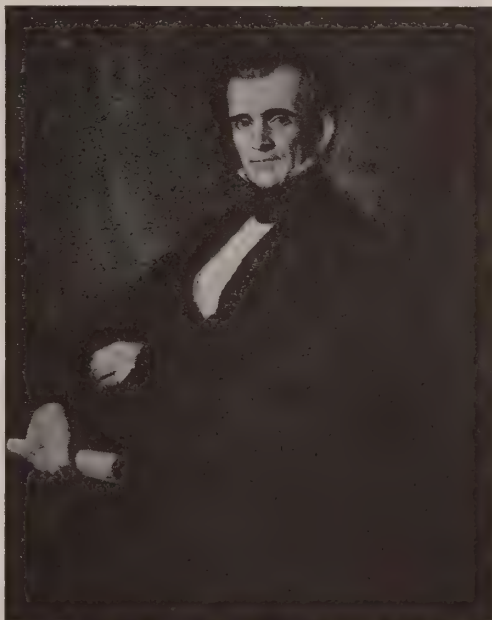
He mounted the rostrum after Carroll declared that he himself would not be a candidate, and for two hours Polk extolled the virtues of the Van Buren administration, heaped praise upon the Democratic party, and declared a political war upon the Whigs. The announcement of his candidacy stimulated the Democracy, and party members proclaimed him as the Moses who would lead the state out of a Whig wilderness into the folds of Democratic control. The editor of the Nashville *Union* estimated that Polk's majority would be 20,000 votes.²

The Maury Countian, who for years had been a respected leader, came from one of the most prominent families in the state. His elder cousin, Colonel William Polk, had been highly successful as a land speculator, and his father, Sam Polk, had grown wealthy as manager of Colonel William's holdings in Middle Tennessee. Sam also had done well on his own as a speculator, army contractor, merchant, and bank director. After graduating in 1818 from the University of North Carolina at the head of his class, young Polk studied law with Felix Grundy, and became a practicing attorney at Columbia. Through Grundy's influence he obtained a clerkship in the state senate in 1819, which position he held until he was elected to the lower house in 1823. The fact that he began as a clerk while Carroll was governor may account for his friendliness to the Governor and his initial coolness to Jackson, although the Old Hero had long been on intimate terms with Colonel William Polk, and had known James Knox since the latter's childhood. In 1823 young Polk supported Jackson in his bid for the United States Senate and two years later followed the Old Hero to Washington where he served in the House of Representatives, part of the time as Speaker, until he was chosen governor in 1839.³ While Democrats hailed Polk's return to state politics as their salvation, the Whig press across the state accused the Speaker of political opportunism and of seeking the gubernatorial chair only because he feared defeat in his bid for reelection to Congress. Reelection, Whigs charged, would result in his dethronement as Speaker. Editors of the Whig press saw in his candidacy an attempt to use the governorship as a steppingstone to the presidency or vice presidency and alleged that if he should be elected, he would be a "Federal agent" who would devote little or no time to state affairs. While no Democrat admitted the allegation, it was partly true. Polk probably could have been returned to Congress without serious difficulty, but a Whig-dominated Congress was sure to repudiate him as Speaker. Moreover, he did have presidential ambitions, and if he could be successful as a Democratic redeemer in the Old Hero's home state, his chances for a nomination in 1840 or 1844 would be enhanced greatly.⁴

Cannon became the Whig candidate, despite a cool reception from party leaders. The editor of the major Whig organ in the eastern section, the Knoxville *Register*, had been critical of him for some time, and John Bell thought him "too sluggish" to defeat Polk. Cannon refused to be forced out, however, and the Whigs accepted him and made the best of it.⁵

Polk returned to the state as quickly as possible after Congress adjourned in March and prepared for the campaign. In the meantime he left no stone unturned in his effort to bolster the Democratic press. Observing the dissension within the Whig party in the eastern section, he sought to enhance Democratic prestige by founding a newspaper, *Argus*, in Knoxville, and employed E. G. Eastman, a New England journalist, as editor. He secured another New Englander, Jeremiah George Harris, to edit the Nashville *Union*, and the editor's caustic pen came to rival that of William G. Brownlow, the Whig editor of East Tennessee, in vituperation against the opposition. Harris had edited the *Bay State Democrat* in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and his rough and straightforward style did much to invigorate Tennessee Democrats and to cause the Whigs to realize that they had in him a dangerous antagonist. In Memphis *The Western World* was launched in January, 1839, and in Jackson the *District Telegraph* pledged aid to Polk. Thus, the Democratic standard-bearer had strong press support in the three major divisions of the state—something which had been lacking in the presidential campaign of 1836. With the press in safe hands, Polk proceeded to outline for himself an extensive itinerary in which he made arrangements to speak in nearly every town across the state. He was especially encouraged by the support pledged to him in the Western district, where new Whig defections were announced daily. Before returning to Washington in October, 1838, he had visited Jackson, Brownsville, Covington, and other West Tennessee towns, where he received enthusiastic support.⁶

The campaign opened officially at Murfreesboro on April 11, 1839. Polk spoke for two hours; then Cannon was heard. Polk's speech followed closely a lengthy statement which he had published and circulated a week earlier. He contrasted the virtues of Jackson with the alleged iniquities of Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams. He charged that Cannon and Tennessee Whigs were mere tools in the hands of the Kentuckian. Polk devoted little time to state issues, but he deplored the Bell-White defection from the Democratic party and he traced "modern Whiggery" to the federalism of Adams and Hamilton. After Polk had spoken,



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

James K. Polk

Cannon, in slow and ponderous style, was heard for ninety minutes. In this and other speeches delivered later, Cannon criticized his opponent for emphasizing national issues, described him as a "tool of Jackson," and alleged that the Old Chief himself was "a tyrant by nature and education" who still was trying to dominate the Democratic party in state and nation, despite his repudiation in 1836 and in 1837. He further deplored the Hero's action with regard to the United States Bank and currency, defended Henry Clay, and called attention to his own military record. A few days after the Murfreesboro speeches, the candidates moved on to Lebanon where Polk spoke for nearly four hours, Cannon for nearly two, and John Bell for one hour. From Lebanon they moved on to Carthage, and thence to towns in the Cumberland Plateau. Large crowds attended the debates, and from the beginning they saw that Polk was master of the situation. Skillful in the use of sarcasm and abuse, the able Maury Countian poked fun at the ponderous Cannon and early became a favorite with the people. Verbal fireworks did not provide the only attraction for the audiences. Bloody street fights broke out among belligerent Democrats and Whigs in some of the towns, and some people, including local candidates, carried weapons. After a few of the joint meetings, Cannon, apparently sensing that he was no match for the skillful debater, pleaded that the press of state business required his attention more than did participation in the debates. He returned to Nashville and did not re-enter the joint debates until July. John Bell, Congressman William B. Campbell, and other Whigs, however, upheld the party standard as best they could. Their combined efforts were unavailing, however, and Polk won by a majority of about 2,500 votes. The margin was so small that for several days the outcome was in doubt.* Democrats hailed it as a "great and glorious triumph."

The importance of the Democratic victory of 1839 cannot be overemphasized. For the Democrats the campaign had been a struggle for survival, and they had pushed forward as a candidate the only man who could have beaten the Whigs; for their opponents it had been a campaign in which Whigs had sought to deliver a final blow to an already reeling Democracy. The party of the Old Hero was restored to a position of control, and James Knox Polk now emerged as one of the nation's foremost leaders in the Democratic party. Democrats also captured control of both houses of the legislature and gained three additional congressional seats, which gave them a total of six out of thirteen. Cave Johnson, defeated in 1837, was restored to his old seat from the Clarksville district.

The Whigs, although disheartened, did not despair. Bell, however, became troubled over Whig defections and believed that unless unity of effort could be

* According to the *House Journal*, 1839, p. 18, the vote, except for Shelby County, was 54,012 to 51,396. The Shelby vote later was published as 781 for Cannon and 627 for Polk, which would have given Polk a margin of 2,462. Polk's majority in Middle Tennessee was 4,403, but Cannon carried the other two divisions by small majorities.

achieved there was little hope for the Whig cause in Tennessee. A convention, planned for Nashville several weeks after the election, was attended by Whig leaders from over the state. There, Bell and other leaders laid extensive plans for the recapture of the state.⁸

The legislature assembled the following October, and before even the governor's message could be received, eager Democrats pushed through a resolution recommending to the national Democratic party Polk's candidacy for the vice presidency. The assembly, after receiving Polk's message, turned its attention to such matters as the Bank of Tennessee, internal improvements, public education, construction of a lunatic asylum, and other matters, all of which are discussed in later chapters.⁹

United States Senators Elected—One of the most troublesome problems faced by the legislature was that of finding suitable replacements for the two Whig United States Senators. Democrats found themselves in a position similar to that occupied by the Tennessee Whigs in 1837. They controlled the gubernatorial chair and the legislature, but the United States Senators, as well as a majority of the Congressmen, were of the opposing party. Senator Hugh Lawson White's term would expire in 1841, and that of Ephraim Foster, who had just replaced Felix Grundy, would expire six years later. Victorious Democrats, unwilling to wait patiently until the terms expired, unfolded a plan whereby the two Senators would be forced to resign. Cooler heads within the party advised that Democrats should be satisfied with a replacement for White only, but obviously the Democratic thirst for power could be satiated only by replacing both. Therefore, they began preparations for the passage of resolutions instructing Foster and White to support Democratic principles and legislation in the United States Senate. It was known, of course, that neither would comply and that both would resign before obeying such commands. By this time resolutions of instruction had become commonplace in Tennessee. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, because the state legislature elected Senators, they were considered state representatives of their political parties. Therefore, legislators saw no impropriety in instructing Senators on how to vote on vital issues. If a Senator could not obey the instruction, then he should in good conscience resign his position.¹⁰

On November 14, 1839, after debates which had lasted for several weeks, the Democratic majority in the legislature passed a series of five resolutions which, in part, instructed Senators to vote for the sub-treasury bill, and to "support in good faith, the leading measures . . . advocated by the present President" Foster, who before the election had threatened to quit if the Democrats won control of the legislature, resigned on November 15. In an eight thousand-word statement he laid before the legislature his reasons for not being able to carry through his instructions. White, however, continued in the Senate temporarily without announcing his intentions.¹¹

The legislature turned immediately to the problem of selecting a replacement for Foster. Several Democrats, among whom were William Carroll and Secretary of War Grundy, appeared desirous of succeeding the displaced Whig Senator. Polk, believing Grundy to be the only Democrat behind whom the legislators would unite, urged Van Buren to encourage Grundy to seek the senatorial seat. Accordingly, in November, an election was held in which Grundy defeated Foster (who was nominated by the Whigs) by a vote of fifty-six to forty-four. A few days later, however, to the amazement of the Democrats, a letter was received from Grundy in which he questioned his own constitutional right to serve, inasmuch as the Constitution specified that a Senator must be an inhabitant of the state from which he is elected. Grundy, a strict constitutionalist, believed that his recent residence in the nation's capital made him ineligible. Grundy found the solution to his problem, however; he hastily resigned his Cabinet post, returned to Nashville, reestablished his residence, and was reelected to the Senate.*¹²

The Democrats next turned to the case of White, the Senator having returned to the 1839-1840 session of Congress without any indication whether he intended to obey or disregard the instructions. At Polk's insistence, Thomas Hart Benton had the sub-treasury bill brought up in Congress in order to force the issue. This was done on January 13, 1840, and White resigned. On January 27, 1840, the legislators received his resignation in which he stated categorically that "These instructions I cannot and will not obey." The dignified but strongly worded message was White's valedictory, for he died a few months later. To the Whigs he became a martyr to the cause, and party leaders now looked with increasing interest to the next election when they would avenge the wrong by unseating their opponents. The selection of Alexander Anderson of Knox County as a replacement for White did not ameliorate the situation, and astute observers in the Democratic ranks probably realized that they had made a mistake of grave consequence when they forced the resignation of the popular Hugh Lawson White.¹³

Presidential Election of 1840.—The simple duties of the governor's office permitted Polk ample time to plan his own political future. The resolution nominating him for the vice presidency pleased him, and he wrote letters to acquaintances indicating his availability for the post. Jackson wrote to Van Buren, Francis Blair, Thomas Hart Benton, and others. The editor of the Nashville *Union* boldly asserted that the fate of the Democratic party depended upon Polk's nomination. A Tennessee delegation, including such stalwarts as Grundy, Carroll, Aaron Brown, Cave Johnson, S. H. Laughlin, and others, departed for the Baltimore Convention in May, 1840, with the intention of pushing Polk's candidacy to the utmost, although several of them had advised the Governor earlier that his chances

* Grundy died December 19, 1840, and Governor Polk appointed A. O. P. Nicholson to serve until the legislature could choose a successor.

for success were poor. Polk's support came largely from the seaboard states, while that of the incumbent, Richard M. Johnson, was centered in the West. Many politicians believed that a vice presidential candidate suitable to the West was necessary to balance Van Buren's presidential nomination. Realizing that Johnson had considerable support, Polk made it clear to the state delegation that he would accept a nomination only if it could be gained without party disagreement. He was only forty-four at the time, and no doubt had an eye on future conventions. After considerable debate, the delegates decided to make no nomination for the vice presidency but to leave the choice to the discretion of the electors. In view of Johnson's pre-convention support, the Tennessee delegation considered the decision a distinct triumph for Polk. All of the Tennesseans had been quite active in the convention, and Grundy, with only a few months to live, had served as temporary chairman and had delivered what today would be considered the "keynote" address.¹⁴

Reports from over the country received in Tennessee during the several weeks that followed the Convention indicated considerable strength for Johnson, and Polk did not relish a defeat. Late in May he drafted a letter to Grundy in which he requested the latter's opinion on his (Polk's) chances of attaining the nomination. Although at the close of the Convention, Grundy replied, Polk's chances of success were good, since that time "the developments in favor of Colonel Johnson . . . are almost decisive." Polk then declined to pursue the nomination further, and shortly thereafter, in a Fourth-of-July address in Knoxville, announced his candidacy to succeed himself as governor. The editor of the Nashville *Union* insisted that he should continue to seek the vice presidency and that his candidacy was vital to the cause of the Democracy, but he took Polk's name from the masthead after July 9.¹⁵

Whigs in the meantime held a convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and nominated William Henry Harrison. Tennessee Whigs did not send a delegation, but they favored the nomination of Henry Clay or Winfield Scott. They agreed, nevertheless, to support the nominee and met in Nashville early in January to make plans for a statewide convention.¹⁶

Both parties proceeded to launch vigorous campaigns, the like of which had never been seen in the Volunteer State. Both were well organized down to the county level where they vied for grassroots support, but the Whigs were able to outstrip their opponents in noise and ballyhoo. Brass bands, free barbecue, pet coons, and log cabins—the last two named items became symbols of the party—were always on display. Excitement ran high. Typical of the many Whig rallies conducted over the state was one held in Clarksville, in late May. Seven or eight thousand persons attended, made merry, and partook of the free barbecue and liquor. Few issues were stressed, but ribaldry and cheers for "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too" replaced sobriety and common sense. Of the campaign as a whole, one politician wrote in August that "there never has been anything to compare

with it. . . . The very children are as deeply imbued with the party *Spirit* as the grown people" The Democrats were not silent, and even the ailing Jackson accompanied Polk to West Tennessee for several public appearances, but the combined efforts of the Hero, Polk, Grundy, Cave Johnson, and other stalwarts were unavailing against the Whig sound and fury. Harrison carried Tennessee by 12,000 votes, and on the national scene the Democracy was defeated for the first time in its history. Polk's failure to receive the vice presidential nomination probably had been one reason for Van Buren's loss of the state, but the "Little Magician" had never been popular in Tennessee, and the Whig barbecue and whiskey had been effective.¹⁷

Polk Defeated in his Bid for Reelection—As mentioned earlier, Polk had announced his candidacy for reelection on July 4, 1840, although the election still was more than a year off. The Whigs considered him a formidable foe, and had difficulty in choosing a candidate to oppose him. He had used satire and ridicule effectively against the slow-witted Cannon in 1839, and Whig leaders, still smarting from that defeat, sought a man who could beat Polk at his own game. Encouraged by the tremendous victory they had won in 1840, they believed that ballyhoo and ribaldry might again be effective. Therefore, when efforts to secure the candidacy of Foster or Bell* failed, they turned to James C. (Lean Jimmy) Jones, an odd-looking man aged 31 years,** who stood six feet two inches in his stocking feet and weighed only 125 pounds. Although a person of little political experience, Jones, with his stock of anecdotes and skill at mimicry, was believed by Whigs to be able to match wits with Polk. The Whig press described their champion as one who was "able . . . efficient, and a true Whig." Democrats, however, did not appear worried. They labeled him as a tool of the "Nashville group" and as one of no political experience who would be easy prey for the seasoned Polk. Even the Old Hero wrote the Governor that Jones's nomination was "well for the Democratic cause," and that Democrats need have no fear for Polk's success.¹⁸

On March 18, 1841, Polk published in the Nashville *Union* a list of his speaking engagements and invited the Whig candidate to join him for debate. Jones accepted, and they met first in Murfreesboro, on March 27. Despite inclement weather, a large crowd assembled to hear them debate for nearly five hours. Thus began one of the strangest campaigns in Tennessee history.

While no one could question Polk's superior knowledge of government or deprecate his years of service in public office, Lean Jimmy soon appeared to be

* Bell was defeated for the speakership of the House in 1839 and accepted an appointment as secretary of war in Harrison's cabinet in 1841. He remained in that position until the Whig revolt against President Tyler, when he joined other cabinet members in resigning.

** He celebrated his thirty-second birthday during the campaign, on June 7, 1841.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Confederate Park (Foreground) and Jefferson Davis Park (on River)

his master in scurrility and comical activity on the stump. The Wilson Countian's personal appearance was in his favor. A tall, lean, gangling man with a solemn, almost grotesque, face, Jones was friendly and simple in his dealings with the rural folk, and had only to appear before them stroking a raccoon fur to send them into gales of laughter. Polk discussed state and national issues with dignity and sobriety. His experience and his broad understanding of government enabled him to deliver learned and convincing arguments in favor of the re-establishment of the sub-treasury system, or of dispensing with unsold Tennessee bonds then in the hands of British brokers, and other important issues. Jones's limited knowledge and inadequate experience handicapped him considerably, but he refused to permit ignorance of the issues to embarrass him. With brass and boldness unprecedented in the state's political history, the Whig substituted bold assertion for knowledge and brazenly discussed any subject Polk brought up simply by refuting it vigorously and denying the truth of Polk's statements. He was a master judging the temper of crowds, and when

public interest lagged he added color by repeating a barrage of anecdotes. After Jones's speech at Woodbury, in June, the Democratic press hopefully reported that he was "letting down," but this report was wishful thinking only, for many impartial observers believed that he gained confidence with every speech. Polk fought back as best he could with ridicule and sarcasm, and the crowds gave him a respectful hearing, but he could not compete with Jones's method of campaigning. The Whigs won by a majority of over 3,000* and gained control of the house of representatives. The senate, however, was to be controlled by the Democrats, since they won thirteen of the twenty-five senate seats. The thirteen Democrats remained steadfastly together on important issues throughout the legislative session and earned the name of "Immortal Thirteen."¹⁹

The defeat was Polk's first before the people of Tennessee. Democratic apathy was blamed; Jackson and other Democrats considered that the Governor had done well to cut the Whig margin from the 12,000 received by Harrison in 1840.

In his legislative message the new Governor recommended that the school system be improved, and advocated such things as internal improvements, completion of the asylum, sound currency, and encouragement to manufacturing interests of the state. The most important question before the legislature, however, was that of electing two United States Senators. An odd situation existed in that both seats were vacant. Alexander Anderson had replaced White in 1840, and his term expired on March 4, 1841. A. O. P. Nicholson's term expired when the legislature convened, inasmuch as he had been appointed to replace the deceased Grundy only until a time when the legislature could choose a successor. The Whigs were not in as covetous a position as they had been in 1837, or as were the Democrats in 1839. While they controlled the house by a majority of three, the opposition held the senate by a precarious majority of one—made even more unsafe by the fact that Senator Sam Turney, Democrat from the Cumberland Plateau district, could not be counted upon to hold steadfastly within the ranks when pressure was applied.** Shortly after the election of 1841 Jackson had stated that Polk should be sent to the Senate, and soon the *McMinnville Gazette* and *Nashville Union* took up the cry of "Polk for Senator." Hopkins L. Turney, Sam's brother, was also a candidate, and Nicholson's brief service in Washington had whetted his desire for a longer sojourn in the nation's capital. Before the legislature convened Whig leaders agreed upon Spencer Jarnigan and

* Jones received 53,586 votes, and Polk polled 50,343. In East Tennessee Jones won by a 17,691 to 14,441 vote; he also carried the Western District 11,524 to 8,996. Polk carried Middle Tennessee, however, 26,911 to 24,371.

** Turney represented White, Jackson, Overton, and Fentress counties. The first two were Whig strongholds, but Overton and Fentress were Democratic. Turney, ambitious to further his career by running for Congress, did not wish to offend his Whig constituents, although he was a life-long Democrat. Therefore, he was usually, but not always (as will be discussed later), within the Democratic fold.

Ephraim Foster. Later, when Bell sacrificed his cabinet post on the altar of party loyalty, he also was available.²⁰

Whigs were confident of their ability to elect both Senators, because the customary method of electing United States Senators was by a joint convention composed of the entire legislature. Democrats realized that they would be outvoted by the Whig majority in the House if they accepted the convention method of filling the vacancies. Relying upon Kent's *Commentaries* and other legal works, they announced that the method of electing Senators by convention was only *custom* and was not *commanded* by the Constitution. Therefore, they concluded, each house should vote separately. By so doing they hoped to frustrate the Whigs in their plan to elect two Senators, and perhaps could force a compromise in which a Senator from each party might be chosen. Sam Turney, the Democrat serving from a predominantly Whig district, had to be held in line, and he was rewarded with the speakership. Democrats took out additional insurance by appealing to his brother, Hopkins L., who assured Polk (who remained quite active in state politics) that he would do all within his power to prevent his brother's defection. As a reward, Hopkins L. was taken up by the Democrats as their candidate for one of the senatorial positions. Polk continued to remain behind the scenes.²¹

On October 19, Democrats in the legislature submitted a questionnaire to Turney, Ephraim Foster, Spencer Jarnigan, and other prospective candidates, and invited them to state publicly their position on a uniform bankrupt law, the distribution bill, a United States bank, a tax bill increasing federal taxes on salt, food, clothing and other necessities, and the right of a legislature to instruct United States Senators. Turney replied immediately in a manner acceptable to the Democrats. Foster and Jarnigan, however, contemptuously refused to answer the queries, and the former wrote a cutting reply to the Thirteen in which he reflected upon their intelligence—or lack of it.²²

On October 20 the senate rejected a house resolution to go into convention for the purpose of electing two Senators. Thereafter, for several weeks the senate discussed the election of United States Senators, but on each occasion motions to go into convention were defeated by a vote of thirteen to twelve. The Thirteen justified their action by alleging that they represented 62,000 voters, while the "Twelve Destructives" (as the twelve Whig senators were called), represented only 58,000. In the meantime Speaker Turney had received strongly worded messages from his constituents in Jackson and White counties, urging him to cease his obstruction tactics. With an eye to his political future he therefore, on November 22, caused consternation in the Democratic ranks by voting with the twelve Whigs for convention, and proceeded on December 2 to go, along with the Twelve Destructives, to the house chamber where United States Senators would be chosen. The remaining twelve Democratic senators, however, refused to join the other legislators, and remained in the senate hall thus preventing the formation of a quorum. The joint convention failed for lack of a quorum, and

Turney and the twelve Whigs, no doubt chagrined and angered, returned to the senate chamber. This strange conduct brought mixed comment from across the state. The Whig press regarded the "high handed proceeding" as an attempt by Democrats to "abrogate the Constitution" in order to gratify their own selfish designs. The Old Hero, however, watching carefully from the Hermitage, believed that his party leaders had protected "the fundamental principles of our Republican system."²³

Although the crisis had been reached and passed, leaders of both parties continued to work toward compromise. Several leading Whigs proposed the names of Bell and Hopkins L. Turney, but Polk could not bear to see his old enemy, Bell, win a senatorial seat so easily. J. P. Hardwicke, Dickson County senator and member of the Thirteen, urged Polk to become a candidate, but the Maury Countian, realizing that defeat was probable, refused to become involved lest it damage his future career. Other proposals were suggested, but the Immortal Thirteen held firm "against the world," and no compromise was reached.²⁴

When the congressional session began on December 6, 1841, Tennessee was not represented in the Senate, and would not be for the entire term. John Catron, Aaron V. Brown, and other prominent Democrats were worried for fear the Thirteen had overplayed their hand; they believed that Whigs might launch the gubernatorial campaign in 1843 with this as the major issue. Such would be difficult to defend. There was little doubt but that Democrats had made a political blunder, and Whigs hastened to herald it as a betrayal of the people. Editors of the *Memphis American Eagle*, the *Nashville Whig*, the *Jonesborough Whig*, the *Knoxville Post*, and other party journals gave vent to strong accusations and blame. Despite this, the Thirteen were not deterred, and continued to obstruct Whig legislation for the rest of Jones's term. They rejected the Governor's nominations of bank directors on two occasions, and blocked an attempt to investigate the Bank of Tennessee, despite a Whig allegation that such an investigation would bring forth "some awful disclosures." Because of its failure to select Senators and to enact constructive legislation, the Twenty-fourth General Assembly has been characterized as a "do-nothing" body.²⁵

As the weeks passed and much blame was heaped upon the Democrats for their obstructive tactics, four members of the Thirteen,* realizing the peril in which they had placed their party's cause, proposed at the end of the session that the power to elect Senators be returned "to the hands of the people." Their statement was ambiguous, but Whig leaders construed it to be a suggestion that all the senators resign, and that new ones be chosen in a popular election. Since the Whigs had a majority in the house but not in the senate, they were quick to agree to such a proposition. The Democrats then insisted that they would resign only if the whole legislature agreed to resign. This, they claimed, would give the people the opportunity to select new members who in all probability could

* S. H. Laughlin, Andrew Johnson, J. P. Hardwicke, and Robert W. Powell.

agree upon two men for the Senatorial posts. The choice would be made at the special session scheduled for autumn, 1842. Democrats proceeded to get their resignations ready, but, when the Whigs hedged, Democrats were able to shift some of the blame for not selecting Senators to leaders of the opposition.²⁶

The special session convened October 4, for the purpose of reapportioning the state's congressional districts, since the 1840 population figures required that the delegation be decreased from thirteen to eleven. In his legislative message, Governor Jones decried the tactics of the Thirteen and proposed in the special session that members now choose two United States Senators. The attempt again resulted in failure, however, as did an attempt to investigate the state bank.²⁷

Jones Defeats Polk Again in 1843—For some time Democratic leaders assumed that Polk would seek in 1843 to avenge his defeat of 1841. Therefore, no other candidate from that party was suggested. Whigs, however, fearful that the magic of Jones's oratory might not again have its mesmerizing effect, were hesitant to choose the young Whig. A strong movement to nominate Ephraim H. Foster developed; and Jones, not desirous of meeting "the Goliath of modern Democracy" again, was more than willing for Foster to run. When all efforts to persuade Foster failed, Lean Jimmy became the reluctant candidate.²⁸

Polk, with an eye to the vice presidency in 1844, announced the longest list of speaking engagements ever published by a Tennessee gubernatorial aspirant and laid the ground work for one of the most thorough campaigns yet witnessed by the people of the state. Throughout the summer he emphasized national issues and steered clear of the work of the Immortal Thirteen. He spent much time in denouncing Henry Clay, since it was generally assumed that the Kentuckian would be the Whig presidential candidate in 1844, and revived the "corrupt bargain" charge. But the Immortal Thirteen, like Banquo's specter, would not down, and Jones kept their work ever before the people. The failure to elect Senators, the refusal to select bank directors, and the rejection of the Whig proposal to investigate the state bank, were the responsibilities of Polk, Jones declared, because Polk was the party leader in Tennessee. The former Governor's efforts to keep the campaign on a high plane were ineffective, and Whig ballyhoo and Jones's brass again triumphed. Polk was defeated, this time by nearly 4,000 votes, and Whigs captured both houses of the legislature.* Polk's second defeat was the darkest hour of his career, while the Whigs hailed Jones's victory as "one of the greatest triumphs" in the history of the party.²⁹

The two major issues before the Twenty-fifth General Assembly were those of electing two United States Senators and the establishment of a permanent loca-

* Jones received 58,307 votes to Polk's 54,474. Polk had a majority in Middle Tennessee of 1,651. Jones, however, won East Tennessee by a vote of 17,239 to 13,956, and West Tennessee 10,996 to 8,692. *Nashville Union*, August 11, 1843; *House Journal*, 1843, p. 92.

tion for the state capital. Although five of the Immortal Thirteen were returned to the upper house, the Whigs had a senatorial majority of fourteen to twelve and a house majority of forty to thirty-five. Confident of success, they held a joint session shortly after they convened, and on October 17 elected Ephraim H. Foster and Spencer Jarnigan to the Senate. They then proceeded to enact into law a method for electing Senators in the future. In no uncertain terms they resolved that Senators were to be chosen by the "two Houses assembled in *Convention* . . .," which of course had been custom since early times, except in 1841.³⁰

Considerable disagreement appeared among legislators when they tried to decide upon a permanent location for the capital. The makers of the constitution of 1834 had made it mandatory upon the legislators of 1843 that they "designate and fix the seat of government . . .," which was not to be removed except by two-thirds vote of both houses. Therefore, on the first day of the session a bill was introduced to put the mandate into effect. Representative John W. Richardson of Rutherford County proposed that it be established "at the county town in the county of which the geographical center of the state may fall." A University of Nashville professor was employed to make the survey, and his study revealed that the exact center was one and one-half miles east of Murfreesboro—Richardson's home town! Other legislators also proposed their county towns, and during the week-long debate, Nashville, Kingston, Lebanon, Hamilton (Sumner County), Sparta, Knoxville, Clarksville, McMinnville, Shelbyville, Chattanooga, Murfreesboro, Franklin, Harrison (Hamilton County), Woodbury, and Columbia were recommended. In the house many of the same towns were voted upon, and others added were: Charlotte, Reynoldsburg (Humphreys County), Carrolsville (Wayne County), Carthage, Smithville, Jackson, Manchester, Monticello (Putnam County), and Taylorsville (Johnson County). Seven days after the initial capital location bill was introduced, Nashville was chosen, and plans were made at once for the construction of a capitol. The city council of Nashville transferred to the state Campbell's Hill near the center of town, and the legislature appointed a board of building commissioners. William Strickland was engaged as architect.³¹

The Whigs next turned their attention to the election of bank commissioners, an investigation of the state bank, and other measures which Jones had advocated during his first term but which had been blocked by the Immortal Thirteen. Since they controlled both houses, they had little difficulty in pushing through the legislation as they desired. The bank investigation, however, was disappointing to the Whigs in that it revealed no wrongdoing.

James Knox Polk Elected President—An even more important development affecting the people of Tennessee during Jones's second term was the nomination and election of James Knox Polk as the eleventh President of the United States. While

plans were being made for the Democratic convention, the names of several candidates appeared in the Democratic newspapers, but Van Buren, with the support of the Old Hero, had an advantage. Richard M. Johnson and Polk were seldom mentioned in connection with the presidency, but appeared prominently as vice presidential possibilities. In April, before the delegates assembled in May, Van Buren took a stand against the annexation of Texas, which practically eliminated him as a serious contender. Jackson's enthusiasm for the Lone Star Republic, strongly expressed in a letter to Congressman Aaron V. Brown in 1843, caused the Hero and others to shift support to Polk. When the Tennessee delegation departed for the Baltimore meeting there was a noticeable lack of harmony among the delegates, and Cave Johnson dismissed Polk's chances of getting the presidential nomination as mere "humbug." The able work of Gideon J. Pillow* and other Polk men, however, brought a strong movement for the Tennessean after seven ballots, and on the ninth vote he was nominated. Whigs, meanwhile, had chosen Henry Clay as their standard bearer, and the Kentuckian was said to have become greatly depressed when informed of Polk's nomination.³²

In Tennessee the fact that voters were evenly divided between the Whigs and Democrats made it evident that the contest would be close. Not only did pride in carrying one's own home state motivate Polk to action, but also Tennessee's fifteen electoral votes** caused him to urge state Democratic leaders to organize and campaign extensively on the local level. He kept in close touch with local leaders and advised Cave Johnson that "Voorhees*** and every other debating man we have" must hold many "small meetings in remote places." A few days before the election Polk again wrote Johnson that because of the doubtful nature of several states, it was "vastly important" that Democrats win Tennessee.³³

Oddly enough, the home state of Houston and Crockett voted against the man who promised the annexation of Texas, and in favor of one who hedged on the issue. Although Polk received 170 electoral votes, to Clay's 105, he failed to carry Tennessee by 113 popular votes. The results are misleading, however, for Tennesseans actually favored the acquisition of Texas and a settlement of the Oregon dispute. But Whigs placed party loyalty before issues. "Manifest destiny" was to be the dominant theme in the Polk administration, and events leading to the annexation of Texas, the settlement of the Oregon dispute, and the acquisition of California and New Mexico will be discussed presently.

Death of Jackson.—Polk's elation over his victory was offset by sadness when his

* Pillow apparently led the fight for Polk, and kept him well informed as to developments. See Jesse S. Reeves, "Letters of Gideon J. Pillow to James K. Polk, 1844," *American Historical Review*, XI (October, 1906), 832-43.

** Only four states had a larger number of electoral votes than Tennessee. They were New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia.

*** Jacob Voorhies was from Dickson County. Both spellings appear in contemporary sources, but "Voorhies" was the one accepted by the family.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—War Memorial Building

political mentor and close friend, Andrew Jackson, died shortly after Polk's inauguration. The Hero had been in ill health for several years, but had watched political events with considerable interest. During the campaign of 1844 he had published commendations of Polk and had been overjoyed at the Democratic victory. He had suffered from acute dysentery since the Indian wars, and his condition had been such that at the time of Van Buren's inauguration many feared he would not reach the Hermitage alive. Jackson regained his health, temporarily, but during the winter and spring of 1845 his condition grew increasingly worse. He died June 8 and was buried beside his beloved Rachel at the Hermitage.*

Flags flew at half mast, and ceremonies honoring the Chief were held throughout the state. Typical was a memorial day service at Charlotte on July 18, with

* Jackson's last hours are told in detail by his adopted son, Andrew Jackson, Junior, in a letter to A. O. P. Nicholson. See Joseph H. Parks (ed.), "Letter Describes Andrew Jackson's Last Hours," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (June, 1947), 176-78. See for foreign comment, Burke, "Jackson as Seen by Foreigners," 44.

Jeremiah George Harris, editor of the Nashville *Union*, as the principal speaker. After a two-hour eulogy of the Old Chief, Harris concluded by comparing him to Washington. He said:

Andrew Jackson was to the American people as the sun to the mariner. Like the father of his country, he descended to the grave loaded with all the civil and military honors of his countrymen . . . The mother shall teach her infant to lisp their names [Washington's and Jackson's] in unison—the father shall teach him to emulate their sterling virtues.³⁴

Aaron V. Brown Elected Governor.—While the Hero lay dying, Democrats made plans to regain the gubernatorial chair in Tennessee. Aaron V. (Fat) Brown, of Pulaski, a Democratic stalwart of long standing, had served ably in both branches of the legislature and also in Congress; he became the unanimous choice of the Democrats. Whigs had discussed the names of Neill S. Brown, Gustavus A. Henry, and Ephraim Foster, and in convention on March 20 nominated Foster. The Nashvillian had served in both houses of the legislature and had been speaker of the house of representatives. He also had been with Jackson in the Creek War and had been the Chief's supporter until 1835 when he turned to the party of White and Bell. As a Whig he had served in the United States Senate. The two experienced men began their joint debates in Clarksville on April 7, 1845, and the speeches gave promise of another colorful campaign.³⁵

Neither candidate espoused a major state issue, but each defended the work of his party. Brown praised Polk for his stand on Texas and Oregon and condemned Foster for voting against annexation. The Whig candidate favored a high protective tariff and a United States bank. Both were able orators and thrilled their audiences with their references to the Bible, the Constitution, and classical literature. Typical was Brown's description of the country when he spoke at Athens in defense of "manifest destiny":

Turn your faces toward the Gulf of Mexico, [he exclaimed] what do you behold? Instead of one lone star faintly shining in the far distant south, a whole galaxy of stars of the first magnitude are bursting on your vision and shining with a bright and glorious effulgence. Now turn with me to the west—the mighty west—where the setting sun dips her broad disk in the western ocean. Look away down through the misty distance to the shores of the Pacific, with all its bays and harbours and rivers. Cast your eyes as far as the Russian possessions in latitude fifty-four degrees and forty minutes. What a new world lies before you. How many magnificent States to be the future homes of the sons and daughters of freedom. Turn now your face to the east, where the morning sun first shines on this land of liberty. Away yonder, you see the immortal old thirteen, who achieved our independence; nearer to us lie the twelve or fifteen States of the great valley of the Mis-

Mississippi stretching and reposing like so many giants in their slumbers
Moses, when standing on the top of Mount Pisgah, looking over on the promised land, gazed not on a scene half so lovely.³⁶

The election was another close one, and the decision was in doubt for several days. The final and official count gave Brown the victory by a majority of 1,623.* Democrats also gained control of the legislature, winning the house by two seats and the senate by one. Democrats were jubilant, and the editor of the Nashville *Union* boasted that Tennessee now had been "redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled from the dominion of Whiggism."³⁷

The most important matter to come before the legislature during Brown's administration was the election of a United States Senator to replace Ephraim Foster, who had resigned to make the gubernatorial race. The Democratic caucus had expressed a preference for A. O. P. Nicholson, but W. C. Dunlap, Hopkins Turney, and General William Trousdale were also contenders. The Whigs, since they were outnumbered in both house and senate, did not hope to elect a Senator from their own party, but they sought to block the election of Nicholson, who was the choice of the majority of the Democrats. For two weeks the legislators debated and voted but were unable to unite behind one candidate. Nicholson, who led on most of the early ballots, finally withdrew in exasperation, and his friends then supported Dunlap. At this point the Whigs concentrated their entire strength on Turney, and finally elected him with the help of six of his Democratic friends. Disgusted Democrats termed Turney a traitor to their cause and proceeded to turn him out of the party. Democratic leaders ignored him when his senatorial term expired, and still later when he ran for state representative, at which time he was defeated by a two-to-one majority.³⁸

Neill S. (*Lean*) Brown Defeats Aaron V. (*Fat*) Brown—Democrats were pleased with the able manner in which Brown had conducted state affairs; therefore, on April 1, 1847, they nominated him for a second term. Whigs began to plan for his downfall shortly after his election in 1845, and the names of Foster, Meredith P. Gentry, Gustavus A. Henry, and Neill S. Brown loomed large in the Whig picture. Foster eliminated himself and expressed his determination not to be a candidate in a letter to the editor of the Nashville *Whig* in October, 1846. Several months later Whigs agreed upon the nomination of Neill S. "*Lean*" Brown, of Pulaski. The race was another in which national issues dominated the campaign. Whigs condemned Polk for his stand on the Oregon question and for his prosecution of the Mexican War. Cave Johnson, Polk's postmaster-general from Clarksville, was accused of incompetence, and other Democratic cabinet members were condemned for alleged ineptitude in the conduct of the war. The results of the

* Brown received 58,269 votes, and Foster polled 56,646. As in previous elections, the Whigs carried both the eastern and western districts, but Democrats mustered a solid majority in Middle Tennessee.

election again were close, with Neill S. winning by a majority of 1,015.* Whigs also would control the legislature, having won the senate thirteen to twelve and the house forty-two to thirty-three. Once again the political pendulum had swung to the Whig side.³⁹

Again an election of a United States Senator was necessary, this time to succeed Spencer Jarnigan. Jarnigan, it will be recalled, was elected in 1843, but he had incurred Whig wrath when he supported the Polk-sponsored tariff reduction measure of 1846, and party leaders were determined not to reelect him. The Whig majority in both houses left no doubt as to the political complexion of the successful candidate; the problem was to select the right man from a list of hopefuls. In quest of the toga were Lean Jimmy Jones, Ephraim Foster, John Bell, and others, all of whom spent long hours in the legislative halls, the lobby, and the tavern taprooms wooing legislators. Bell, a representative from Davidson County, had an advantage over the rest. He could have been elected speaker of the house had he so desired, but he refused because he wished to be "tongue-loose" on the floor. From the beginning he probably had in mind succeeding Jarnigan.⁴⁰

Whigs from the three grand divisions of the state were far from united in their choice. West Tennesseans nominated Robertson Topp, of Memphis, and party members from the eastern section placed in nomination the names of William B. Reese and John Netherland. Others were nominated, but after several weeks of voting and debating legislators realized that they could unite only behind John Bell. The editor of the Knoxville *Tribune* had written earlier that Bell was more than a sectional candidate—he was "John Bell of Tennessee." William G. Brownlow, editor of the Jonesborough *Whig*, was another East Tennessean who supported Bell. In West Tennessee the editor of the Memphis *Weekly American Eagle* wrote during the debate that the majority of the people of West Tennessee favored Bell. Finally, on November 22, after one month of debate, the Nashvillian was elected on the fifty-fourth ballot. He and Turney now composed the Tennessee senatorial team.⁴¹

Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War—While Whigs and Democrats, almost equally divided, struggled for political control of the state, national affairs held the attention of the people. Polk had been elected on a platform which obligated him to settle the Oregon dispute and annex Texas. In his inaugural address he had stated as an additional goal the acquisition of California, the attainment of which finally necessitated a war with Mexico.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, Tennesseans had been active in the Texas revolt against Mexico, and had helped secure the independence of the Lone Star Republic. The new state sought immediate recognition and annexation by the United States, and on March 3, 1837 the Old Hero closed his political career by granting her recognition. William H. Wharton, the Tennessean who had played

* Neill S. Brown received 61,469 votes, and Aaron V. Brown polled 60,454.

an important role in the war for Texas independence, was named minister to the United States, with specific instructions to "effect annexation." In August, 1838, he sought to obey his command by formally proposing annexation to the United States government, but the matter met with opposition from the people, especially those living north of the Mason-Dixon line. Some claimed annexation would mean that a huge Texas debt would have to be assumed by the United States, that slavery would be extended, and that it would lead to war with Mexico. Former President John Quincy Adams, then a member of the House of Representatives, spoke for three weeks against it; other abolitionists condemned the plan and joined in opposition with Adams. Although Tennessee and other states passed resolutions favoring annexation, it became evident that such would not be possible at the time, and the Texas Senate formally withdrew the annexation bid on October 1, 1838.⁴²

During the next four years no overtures were made, but Texans evidently were having a difficult time, just as the Americans had during the period of the Confederation. In 1842 several states, including Tennessee, Alabama, and Louisiana, passed resolutions urging annexation. Tennesseans urged their representatives in Congress to "use every exertion in their power to procure the admission of Texas into the Union . . ." In the meantime European nations, especially Great Britain, had become especially interested in Texas. By the following year it had become known in Washington that an exchange of communications had taken place between the government of Great Britain and Texas, and that the former sought to block any agreements between the young Republic and the United States. The thoughts of a British protectorate on the Gulf of Mexico were alarming to American State Department officials, and Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur impressed upon President Tyler the urgency of the situation. Consequently, in October, 1843, negotiations were resumed. At this point Aaron V. Brown, then a member of the House of Representatives, wrote Jackson for advice. The Old Hero responded immediately and urged him to encourage Tyler to proceed with plans for annexation. The President, cursed by his own party, was most desirous of doing something to gain fame and was much heartened by Jackson's and Brown's words of encouragement.⁴³

In the meantime the election of 1844 was held, and as noted earlier, Polk, Cave Johnson, and other Tennesseans took strong stands in favor of annexation. During the summer Tyler had proceeded with plans to accept Texas by treaty, but since this method required a two-thirds vote of the Senate, it was not successful. Southern and Western Senators, with those from Pennsylvania and Illinois, favored it, but Eastern Senators, reflecting public opinion of their states, strongly opposed it. In Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York some people talked of a dissolution of the Union should Texas be admitted, and an editor of a Boston newspaper wrote that proper Bostonians would oppose annexation "with the last drop of our blood." William Lloyd Garrison, an obscene master of hate and



Winchester—Franklin County Court House

invective, kept up a constant barrage of propaganda against the “slavocracy” and Texas.⁴⁴

Polk’s election in November, 1844, by a sound majority caused annexation sentiment to increase in Washington. Tyler, interpreting the election as a mandate, determined to secure Texas before his term expired on March 4. Consequently, the President proposed annexation by joint resolution of both houses, a procedure which would require only a simple majority vote, and this met final approval and was signed by Tyler on March 1, 1845. Both of Tennessee’s Senators and seven of its representatives voted against annexation, although it was quite evident that they were voting the sentiments of their (Whig) party rather than the desires of the people of the state. Shortly before the final vote Senator Foster stated that he would vote for annexation provided the Texas debt would not be assumed by the United States, and providing that if new states should be carved from Texas the people in the affected area should decide by popular referendum on the slavery question. These conditions were not met, and Foster voted against annexation. By late December, 1845, Texans had drawn up a new constitution, had accepted the American proposal for annexation, and had become the twenty-eighth state.⁴⁵

President Polk was able to resolve the Oregon question with less difficulty, but it did require skilled diplomacy. For more than three decades before Polk’s election American and British interests in Oregon had formed a subject for diplomatic negotiation. Joint occupation had been agreed upon in 1818, and nine years later the two countries agreed to continue the arrangement indefinitely. In the early 1840’s, as the American people swarmed westward, increased interest was manifested in Oregon, and a few expansionists insisted that the United States

should assert its claim to all of the territory; that is, to the line of fifty-four degrees and forty minutes. The Oregon question became an issue in the campaign of 1844, and Polk declared in his inaugural address that American title to "the whole of Oregon is clear and unquestionable." While there is no evidence that any American had taken the extreme position of "fifty-four forty or fight"* to this point, the British government began to prepare for war and some people in America believed that armed conflict would be inevitable.⁴⁶

While the supreme object of the United States was settlement at the forty-ninth parallel, many people interpreted Polk's position to be that of taking all of Oregon even if the use of force became necessary. George D. Phillips, of Georgia, reported that he

heard a crowd . . . , not one of whom knew on which side of the Rocky Mountains Oregon was, swear that they would support and fight for Polk, . . . that he was right, and we would have Oregon and thrash the British in the bargain.

The Old Hero, "weak and debilitated," wrote in strong support of Polk's expressed position, as did many editors of Democratic papers. The President, however, entertained serious doubts that the country would support the claim if it meant actual war with Great Britain. Within his own party, two outstanding factional leaders—Thomas Hart Benton and John C. Calhoun—utterly refused to support the extreme claims and insisted upon compromise at the forty-ninth parallel. Senator Hopkins Turney also supported compromise, and in December, 1845, he advised Polk that to insist upon all of Oregon would create an irreparable breach in the Democratic party. The British in the meantime offered settlement at the forty-ninth parallel, inasmuch as the Hudson's Bay Company was evacuating the disputed territory anyway. Therefore, despite talk of "fifty-four forty or fight," Polk submitted the British offer to the Senate for advice, where it was accepted by a vote of 37 to 12. The final treaty was concluded on June 15, 1846.⁴⁷

California was not so easily acquired as Oregon. On the contrary, only after the Mexican War ended in an American victory could the Bear Flag State be added to the Union. Tennesseans exhibited a greater interest in this affair than they had shown in the War of 1812. The people had developed an intense hatred of Mexico since the Texas Revolution, and the declaration of war in May, 1846, met with wide approval in the state.⁴⁸

Polk first tried to acquire the western territory by negotiation. He was pre-

* Recent research by Edwin A. Miles, in his "'Fifty-four Forty or Fight'—An American Political Legend," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLIV (September, 1957), 291-309, has observed that the slogan was not used in the campaign, and "did not gain currency until approximately one year after inauguration . . ." Similar conclusions are reached by Hans Sperber, in an article appearing in *American Speech*, XXXII (February, 1957), 5-11.

pared to offer the then-large sum of \$25,000,000 for California and New Mexico, and dispatched John Slidell to Mexico with orders to purchase the desired area and to settle the Texas boundary dispute. The Mexicans not only bluntly rebuffed the presidential representative, but they insisted upon the Nueces River as the southern boundary of Texas instead of the Rio Grande. General Zachary Taylor in early February, 1846, was ordered to assume a position on the east bank of the Rio Grande and to enforce the United States' claim to the territory. In April an American scouting party was ambushed by Mexicans, and sixteen men were killed or wounded. Several encounters took place immediately thereafter, and by May 9, news of the bloodshed reached Washington. A formal declaration of war followed. A few days later the information reached Tennessee, and the editor of the *Nashville Union* heralded the news with the spread, "To Arms! To Arms!! To Arms!!!"⁴⁹

Hundreds of Tennesseans, confident of an early victory over their southern neighbor, made ready to join Taylor and besieged Governor Brown with requests that they be mustered into service. Brown, however, wisely awaited orders from Washington, while the Whig press vilified him for his inaction. The *Memphis Enquirer* urged the youth of Memphis to go to Louisiana and enlist, rather than to wait on Brown. The editor of the *Union*, however, warned against hasty action and insisted that the young men prepare for the day when "the summons comes." On May 16 the War Department ordered Governor Brown to organize one regiment of cavalry and two regiments of infantry. Memphis was suggested as the place of concentration for the mounted regiment, and Nashville was designated for the regiments of infantry.⁵⁰

A few days after receiving the message Governor Brown issued a call for troops and was besieged by unprecedented volunteering. About 2,800 men were wanted, but more than ten times that number offered their services. Because far more wished to serve than were necessary, the privilege of being taken into the service was determined by lottery. According to a Nashville newspaper, some disappointed volunteers offered as much as \$250 to the "lucky" men whose numbers had been drawn and who were to fight in Mexico. Once organized, Tennessee troops were dispatched with haste to Mexico, where they fought bravely and played important roles in the battles of Cerro Gordo, Monterey, Chapultepec, and others.⁵¹

As the war continued the President became a prime target for his Whig opponents who heaped abuse upon his head and sneeringly referred to "Mr Polk's War." Then generals and politicians fell to bickering among themselves. Polk's fellow Tennesseans, like citizens in other parts of the nation, were confident, when hostilities began, that the Mexicans would surrender after a few skirmishes and perhaps a major defeat. General Zachary Taylor, a Knoxville editor declared, was only awaiting the arrival of Tennessee troops before he began a hasty and triumphal march into Mexico City. As the war continued without bringing an im-

mediate victory, and as the stubborn resistance of the Mexican army brought loss of life to many who had marched proudly to war only a few weeks earlier, Whigs in the state became caustic in their denunciation of the administration's war policy. When dysentery, measles, and other illnesses took even more lives than did Mexican bullets, Polk was described as a butcher who had brought on an unwanted war "in violation of the Constitution," and Gideon J. Pillow was denounced for the "terrible carnage."⁵²

The conduct of the war became the main issue in the gubernatorial contest between Aaron V. Brown and Neill S. Brown (1847). The Whig candidate denounced President Polk for his "unconstitutional acts," and accused him of favoring Democratic generals over those of Whig persuasion, of interfering with the commands of Generals Winfield Scott and Taylor, and of destroying the morale of the men by appointing "democratic friends" to positions of command instead of abiding by the time-honored custom of permitting volunteer troops to elect their own commanders. Aaron Brown defended Polk and blamed Generals Taylor and Scott, but, as observed earlier, he was defeated by his Whig opponent.⁵³

In Washington John Bell became the spokesman for Tennesseans who opposed the conduct of the war. On February 2, 1848—the same day the Mexican peace representatives met Nicholas P. Trist at Guadalupe Hidalgo and signed the peace treaty—Bell began a two-day speech before the Senate in which he denounced the conduct of the war and opposed the raising of more troops. The people of Tennessee, Bell explained, had supported the war although many had questioned Democratic motives behind it. Not only were the people of Tennessee opposed to a continuation of the conflict, Bell alleged, but also a vast majority of people in other states desired peace also. The editor of the Nashville *Union* condemned the speech as that of a "demagogue," but neither he nor other Democrats could deny that Bell had expressed the sentiments of many people in his home state. Senator Hopkins Turney disagreed with Bell, and a week later he arose to defend Polk's prosecution of the war and to insist upon the passage of a bill to raise additional troops. The United States, Turney insisted, was waging a defensive war, brought on by Mexico in retaliation for the annexation of Texas, and pointed an accusing finger at the Whig party by alleging that its members saw eye to eye with the Mexican government on the major war issues. When Trist's treaty was presented to the Senate, in which the vast area known as the "Mexican Cession" would be added to the United States, both Bell and Turney voted with the majority to accept it. Although Bell pronounced the acquisition of California and New Mexico "a curse," he felt justified in voting for the treaty if it would mean cessation of hostilities.⁵⁴

The term of the second and last Tennessean to be elected to the presidency (to 1960) came to a close on March 4, 1849. Although many friends insisted that he become a candidate for a second term, he remained true to his pledge made in 1844 that he would serve only four years. His had been a successful administra-

tion, although not devoid of strife. He had seen the accomplishment of those things most sought by his party: the annexation of Texas, the reduction of tariff, the reestablishment of the independent treasury plan, the settlement of the Oregon dispute, and the acquisition of California and New Mexico. Polk returned to Middle Tennessee and took up residence in Nashville. He died shortly thereafter, on June 15, 1849.

Polk's death marked the passing of a decade of partisan fury in Tennessee. Whigs and Democrats had been so evenly matched during the period that practically every gubernatorial election was decided by a relatively few votes. Tennesseans could look with satisfaction on their military record. Jackson's men who served in the War of 1812 earned the title of the "Volunteer State" for their homeland, and their sons enhanced their reputations in the Mexican War as fighting men. During the period some of the state's ablest men had performed on the state and national stages, while Polk has been belatedly recognized as one of the strongest Presidents to hold office. The decade which followed was to be another fraught with trying circumstances.

CHAPTER XVIII—NOTES

1. C. L. Grant, "The Public Career of Cave Johnson," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (September, 1951), 204; Powell Moore, "James K. Polk and Tennessee Politics, 1839-1841," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 9 (1937), 31; Sellers, *Polk*, 341; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 269; Thomas B. Alexander, "The Presidential Campaign of 1840 in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (March, 1942), 31.
2. Moore, "Polk and Politics," 32-33; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 269-70; Sellers, *Polk*, 353-55; *Nashville Union*, March 22, September 3, 1838; *Nashville Republican Banner*, September 5, 1838.
3. Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "James K. Polk's Political Apprenticeship," *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 25 (1953), 38-39; "Jim Polk Goes to Chapel Hill," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XXIX (April, 1952), 189-203; and *Polk*, *passim*; Powell Moore, "James K. Polk: Tennessee Politician," *Journal of Southern History*, XVII (November, 1951), 494.
4. *Nashville Republican Banner*, September 11, 1838; *Nashville Whig*, October 12, 1838; *Memphis Enquirer*, September 21, 29, 1838, as cited in White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 270; *Columbia Observer*, September 21, 1838, as cited in Moore, "Polk and Politics," 33.
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CHAPTER XIX

Transportation and Internal Improvements

EARLY TRANSPORTATION BY LAND AND WATER—The development of adequate means of transportation, whereby the people could export their produce to market and bring in from the outside the necessities which they could not make at home, has been a problem of vital importance to Tennesseans. Before the coming of the railroad the people were dependent on roads and rivers, and since the navigation of the principal rivers, especially the Tennessee, was seriously obstructed, the opening and maintenance of roads was a matter of great concern during the early days. The roads first used by the pioneers usually followed Indian trails, which in turn frequently made use of buffalo paths. Later these buffalo-Indian-pioneer trails became turnpikes and eventually modern highways; and until modern earth-moving machinery made possible the improvement and straightening of these highways, travelers needed to stretch their imagination very little to believe that they were following routes originally marked by a wandering buffalo.

One of the earliest and most noted trails was the Wilderness Road marked by Daniel Boone from the Long Island of the Holston through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky following the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals of 1775. Actually it was an extension of a trail down the Holston Valley through southwestern Virginia over which early hunters and settlers had passed. Later it became a wagon road and one of the most important routes of migration in our national history. In the late 1770's a wagon road was opened from Burke County, North Carolina, across the mountains to Jonesboro. As settlement progressed down the Holston Valley, roads were opened along that river and also the Nolichucky and French Broad as far as Knoxville. From a point on the Holston Road called Bean's Station (now inundated by Cherokee Lake) an alternate route of the Wilderness Road was opened about 1785 across Clinch Mountain to Cumberland Gap. For many years the only overland connection between the East and Middle Tennessee settlements was by the Wilderness Road into Kentucky and through the Cumberland Valley to Nashville. In 1788, however, a road was cut from Campbell's Station, a few miles west of Knoxville, across the Cumberlands to the Middle Tennessee settlements. Judge McNairy and Andrew Jackson were among the first travelers along

this road. At first it was merely a bridle path, but later it was made into a wagon road. Since it was originally opened by the North Carolina militia, it was called the North Carolina Road, occasionally Avery's Trace, after Peter Avery, who guided the expedition.

In 1794 the assembly of the Southwest Territory provided for a lottery to raise funds for the opening of a road to connect the Washington and Moro districts. This road had been authorized by the Treaty of the Holston (1791) with the Cherokee Indians. The lottery seems to have failed, however, and the state legislature in 1799 appropriated \$1,000 for the road. Construction was held up because of disagreements with the Indians and a lack of cooperation from the federal government. Eventually it was built by a group of five commissioners incorporated as the Cumberland Turnpike Company in 1801 and granted the proceeds from the collection of specified tolls for ten years. It was called the Walton Road* after William Walton, the most active of the commissioners appointed for its construction. In 1811 the state took charge of the road and appointed another group of commissioners to collect the tolls and keep the road in repair.** In 1802 the Chickasaw Indians consented to the opening of a road through their country, and the federal government built the famous Natchez Trace (now a national parkway) from Nashville to Natchez. Extended northward by the Tennessee Path to Lexington, Kentucky, it became the highway by which boatmen returned from New Orleans to the Cumberland and Kentucky settlements. In 1804 the Tennessee legislature appropriated \$750 for the cutting of a road from Southwest Point (Kingston) and Tellico to connect with a Georgia road in the Cherokee Nation. The state contracted with Adam Peck for the construction of this so-called "Federal Road."

The maintenance of local roads was in charge of the county governments. As early as 1801 specific counties were authorized to open roads, put turnpikes (turnstiles) on them, and collect tolls, and in 1804 a general law was passed authorizing county courts to lay out public roads, build bridges, and establish ferries. All white males between the ages of 18 and 50 were required to work on the roads or pay 75 cents a day in lieu of such work. In 1821 the legislature directed that all public roads be divided into three classes: (1) stage

* The tolls authorized by the act of 1801 were: "For each wagon and team, 75 cents; for each four wheel carriage for the conveyance of persons, \$1.50; for each chair and horse, 75 cents; for each cart and team, 33 1/3 cents; for each man and horse, 12 1/2 cents; for each led or loose horse, 6 1/4 cents; for each head of cattle, hogs or sheep, one cent; for each taxable poll traveling on foot, 6 1/4 cents." Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 387. Several years ago markers commemorating the Walton Road were placed along the highway which roughly follows its course from Kingston to Nashville.

** By 1815 the state was attempting to lease the road to a private company, since government operation had "uniformly brought the state in debt." *House Journal*, 1815, p. 136.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—View from River

roads or roads of equal importance, (2) second class wagon roads, at least twelve feet in width and designated by two notches on trees along the route, and (3) roads merely of sufficient width to permit the passage of a horse and rider, which were marked with only one notch on wayside trees. Sometimes individuals were authorized to open roads and collect tolls for keeping them in repair, but as time passed it became customary to charter turnpike companies for the building and maintenance of through roads. A perennial problem which necessitated legislative action was the practice of travelers of evading the payment of tolls by striking out across country around the toll gates.¹

As mentioned in earlier chapters, the Indians and then the white settlers made considerable use of the rivers for commerce and travel. The former used mainly "dugout" canoes, but the whites built flatboats and keelboats. The flatboats varied greatly in character, from primitive rafts to large, flat-bottomed boats with cabins for passengers. It was almost impossible to propel them upstream, and when they reached their destination they usually were broken up and sold, and their navigators returned home overland. The keelboat was lighter and narrower than the largest flatboats and was framed about a long, stout piece of timber called a "keel," which made it easier to steer, and it could be propelled upstream. Although it carried sails and made use of the wind where possible, chief reliance was placed on poles. The members of the crew, on each side of the boat, would place the ends of their poles on the bottom of the river and propel the vessel upstream as they walked from prow to stern. Where the current was too deep or swift for "poling," a rope would be put around a tree on the bank and the boat literally pulled upstream. In either case it involved backbreaking labor. In 1819 it required 67 days to propel a keelboat from New Orleans to Nashville.

The extent to which even small streams were used for transportation in the early days is indicated by the great number of state laws declaring certain rivers and creeks to be navigable and prohibiting their obstruction by mill dams and fish traps. Included were many small, mountain streams which could be navigated only during the flood season. Apparently, it was customary for the people living along their banks to load their flatboats and wait for days or weeks for a flood and then ride these bucking craft down the raging currents to distant markets, even as far as New Orleans.

Various devices were resorted to for improving the navigability of rivers. One was the incorporation of navigation companies, such as those for the Nolichucky and Harpeth,* respectively, in 1801 and 1813, with authority to remove obstructions and collect specified tolls from the users of the river. The improvement of the Duck River was financed in 1813 by the collection of a

* This company was required to build canals or slopes around mill dams, and was empowered to collect tolls of not more than six cents per hundredweight of produce or merchandise conveyed up or down the river.

special tax in Hickman County and the sale of lots in the town of Columbia, in Maury County. In the same year a lottery was authorized for the improvement of the upper Holston and the Watauga. As mentioned in a preceding chapter (XV), a small amount of revenue from the sale of land south of the French Broad was appropriated for the improvement of the Holston and the Tennessee rivers to the southern boundary of the state. After the Hiwassee District had been acquired in 1819, a bill was introduced in the legislature for the appropriation of \$500,000 from the anticipated receipts from the sale of land in that area for the improvement of the rivers of the state; but the onset of the economic depression, together with a natural reluctance to appropriate funds before they were in the treasury, prevented its enactment.²

The inhabitants of the Cumberland Valley had a reasonably direct access by river to the Gulf of Mexico at New Orleans, even though the Cumberland does follow a northward course for some distance before reaching the Ohio. But the much greater bend of the Tennessee down into Alabama and its longer northward course across Tennessee and Kentucky to the Ohio, together with the serious obstructions at the Muscle Shoals and elsewhere, meant that the inhabitants of the Tennessee Valley had a long and hazardous journey to reach the mouth of the Mississippi. Consequently, they were greatly interested in the possibility of a short cut to the Gulf at Mobile, made feasible by the proximity of branches of the Mobile River to branches of the Tennessee.* Residents of lower Middle Tennessee were interested in the proposal, made as early as 1807, that a road or canal could be built to connect the Tombigbee, the western branch of the Mobile River, with Bear Creek, which flows into the Tennessee below the Muscle Shoals.** East Tennesseans were more interested in a connection between the eastern tributaries of the Mobile—the Alabama and its branch, the Coosa—with the Hiwassee River. This would not only provide a shorter route to the Gulf but also bypass the obstructions at the Muscle Shoals. A modification of this idea seems to have been used to some extent, beginning in 1821. Boats were poled up the Hiwassee and its Ocoee branch to a point near the Georgia-Tennessee line and pushed overland on vehicles made for the purpose about eleven miles to the Conesauga River, a branch of the Coosa. Then they were floated down those rivers and the Alabama and the Mobile to the Gulf. The Cherokee Indians objected to this practice, however, and when a company was chartered by Tennessee in 1826 to

* As mentioned in Chapter XIV, this possibility was one reason for the popularity of the War of 1812 in Tennessee, in the expectation that the war would lead to (as it did) the acquisition of Mobile by the United States.

** A variation of this canal proposal, actually to connect the Tennessee itself with the Tombigbee, has been before Congress continuously since TVA developed the Tennessee as a navigable waterway to Knoxville. If actually carried out, it would result in a direct connection of the Tennessee with the Gulf of Mexico.

build a Hiwassee-Coosa canal, they absolutely refused to permit its construction.* By the time the Indians were moved west, the railroad era had arrived, and the canal idea was considered obsolete.

The canal fever in the West which was aroused by the building of the Erie Canal in New York led to several other Tennessee proposals, only one of which attained success; and it was located outside the bounds of the state. Tennesseans as well as the residents of Alabama, proposed the building of a canal around the Muscle Shoals, and a canal, built with the aid of a federal land grant around the middle part of the Shoals, actually was completed in 1836. It was almost useless, however, and was largely superseded by a railroad. Other canals proposed would have connected the Mississippi with the Forked Deer River, with the Tennessee, and with the Hatchie, respectively. A fourth proposal—a canal from the Tennessee to the Hatchie—actually was surveyed, following a recommendation from Governor Cannon to the legislature in 1835, but nothing further was done.³

Steamboats on Tennessee Waters.—The first steamboat on the Mississippi, the *New Orleans*, commanded by Captain Nicholas Roosevelt, met with a strange reception. It arrived at the border of Tennessee in December, 1811, just in time to experience the first shock of the New Madrid earthquakes which created Reelfoot Lake. Nevertheless, within the next few years steamboats were regularly plying the "Father of Waters" and the Ohio. The first steamboat to reach Nashville—the *General Jackson*, owned in part by William Carroll—did not arrive until March 11, 1819. A year earlier it had come up the Cumberland as far as Harpeth Island, twenty miles below the city, but had been forced to unload at that point because of obstructions in the river. In 1819 crewmen prepared to unload at the same place when a sudden rise in the river enabled them to continue on to Nashville. The *Nashville Whig* reported briefly: "A sight so novel, at this place, has attracted large crowds of spectators." Within a few days the boat departed for New Orleans with passengers and a cargo of tobacco. The development of steamboat navigation on the Cumberland,** when the necessary river improvements were made,

* Georgians suggested as an alternative proposal a canal to connect the Tennessee and Savannah river systems, which would give East Tennesseans an even shorter route to market by direct access to the Atlantic seaboard, but Cherokee opposition again stood in the way. Thus the citizens of these two states had another reason for desiring Cherokee removal.

** Among the steamboats on the Cumberland in the 1830's were the *Cumberland*, the *Rifleman*, the *General Robertson*, the *Rocket*, and the *Nashville*. The *Rambler*, in 1833, reached Russell County, Kentucky. Most of the boats ran to New Orleans, but some went to Louisville, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Florence, and other river ports. In a typical week in 1846, fifteen steamboats arrived at Nashville and thirteen departed.

greatly benefited Nashville, which became a distributing point for a large area. Even Knoxville merchants found it profitable to obtain some of their goods from New Orleans by way of Nashville. Exports from Middle Tennessee also could be moved more profitably to market. These included cotton, tobacco, other farm produce, and the iron products of the furnaces of Dickson, Stewart, and Humphrey counties. Clarksville in Montgomery County became an important shipping center for tobacco, exporting 7,000-8,000 hogsheads annually by the middle 'forties.⁴

Steamboat navigation on the Tennessee as far as the foot of the Muscle Shoals began soon after the steamers appeared on the Cumberland. The *Rocket* arrived at Florence, Alabama, from New Orleans and Nashville in 1822. It was not until 1828, however, that a steamboat succeeded in getting over the Shoals, conquering the dangerous hazards of the "Suck" and the "Boiling Pot" below the site of Chattanooga, and finally reaching Knoxville. This boat, owned by an Alabama company, was appropriately named the *Atlas*; it was commanded by Captain S. D. Conner. It arrived at the East Tennessee metropolis on the evening of March 3, but then dropped back down the river and waited until the next morning, when it "sailed up in handsome style to the great gratification of a numerous concourse of citizens" who had been warned of its approach by the firing of a cannon. Despite its enthusiastic reception, the *Atlas*, after returning to the Muscle Shoals, never again ventured a trip to Knoxville. Her arrival, however, had stimulated Knoxvilleians. A company organized by W. B. A. Ramsey promptly acquired a steamboat which they christened *Knoxville*, on April 25, 1831. As a result of improvements which were made in the navigability of the river, the boat was able to establish an intermittent service between Knoxville and Decatur, Alabama, at the head of the Muscle Shoals.* Smaller steamers, such as the *Guide* and the *Harkaway*, were somewhat more successful, but the obstructions to the navigation of the Tennessee were so great that it required the TVA ultimately to surmount them.⁵

The coming of the steamboat to Tennessee waters greatly stimulated interest in internal improvements. Major attention naturally was given to the removal of obstructions to steamboat navigation of the major rivers, but agitation also developed for improvement in the navigability of the smaller streams, even by keelboats and flatboats. Interest also was stimulated in turnpike building, so that outlying farmers might have more ready access to steamboat shipping points. Effective measures were postponed, however, by a prolonged debate over the source of funds—the state or the federal government. Involved, naturally, was the bitter controversy over the constitutionality of federal aid.

* Her captain, for a part of her career, was George Washington Harris, the author of the "Sut Lovingood" yarns. After seven years of financial loss she was renamed *Indian Chief* and used in the removal of the Cherokee Indians.

After the Tennessee legislature refused in 1819 to appropriate half a million dollars of Hiwassee land funds for river improvement and used that revenue as a backing for the New State Bank's paper money, it seriously neglected internal improvements for several years. It fell back upon the ineffectual practice of authorizing lotteries for various types of improvement, while keeping a weather eye peeled in the direction of the federal treasury. In 1827 the legislature summarily closed the door, so far as internal improvements were concerned, to the major source of state funds for such purposes—the proceeds from the sale of public lands. With the exception of one-half of the funds already received (about \$175,000), it assigned all past and future receipts from that source to the common school fund.* Even the appropriation of the unassigned \$175,000 was postponed until the next session.⁶

At the next session, of 1829-30, the legislators enacted Tennessee's first comprehensive system of state aid; yet, inconsistently, they also sent three memorials to Congress asking federal assistance in making internal improvements. One memorial requested aid in removing obstructions from the Cumberland River at Harpeth Shoals; another asked that the federal government promote the building of a national road from Washington to New Orleans; and the third asked for aid in the building of a canal or railroad between the Hiwassee and Coosa rivers. When President Jackson in 1830 revealed his opposition to federal aid by vetoing the Maysville Road Bill, the Tennessee legislators swallowed the words of these memorials by adopting in 1831 without a dissenting vote a resolution approving the presidential veto. Nevertheless, there was considerable sentiment in Tennessee, especially in the eastern and western divisions, in favor of federal aid,** which contributed to the anti-Jackson movement which soon developed within the state, as was described in a previous chapter. Ironically, Middle Tennesseans, who most loyally supported Jackson's anti-federal aid policy, were the only citizens of the state to benefit materially from federal appropriations made while he was President. Jackson's interpretation of the Constitution was characterized by some "hair-splitting"; he was willing to approve appropriations for river improvement up to the highest port of entry from the ocean, since they were related to foreign commerce. Nashville was declared a port of entry, and between 1832 and 1837 Jackson signed bills providing a total of \$135,000 for the improvement

* This was done in the expectation that the New State Bank would be liquidated, as it was a few years later. See Chapter XIV.

** Three East Tennesseans in Congress and the West Tennessee Representative, David Crockett, voted for the Hemphill Bill for the Washington-New Orleans road (which failed to pass) and also to override Jackson's veto of the Maysville Road Bill. Crockett, however, expressed his disappointment that the Washington road was not to terminate at Memphis, and he explained his support of the measure on the ground that Tennesseans should "share in the snacks" of public funds which apparently were going to be spent. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 66.

of the Cumberland River below the Middle Tennessee metropolis near which was located his own home and plantation, the Hermitage.⁷

Just before Tennesseans' hopes for federal aid were largely blasted by Jackson, the state legislature on January 2, 1830, made its first substantial appropriation for internal improvement: \$150,000 from the unassigned land revenue, with East and Middle Tennessee being allocated \$60,000 each and the remaining \$30,000 going to the Western District. Under the administration of a special board of internal improvement for East Tennessee, that section's share was used rather effectively for the improvement of the Tennessee River between Knoxville and the Alabama line, making possible the irregular navigation mentioned above. In the other two divisions the funds were scattered among numerous local projects* without much benefit to the state as a whole.⁸

The Early Railroad Movement—Railroads operated by horse power were in use in Eastern United States as early as 1826, and in 1829 the first steam locomotive was imported from England. The railroad fever rapidly spread to Tennessee, with the suggestion being made in 1827 that a railroad instead of a canal be used to connect the Hiwassee and Coosa rivers. In November-December, 1831, the Tennessee legislature granted six railroad charters, but it is obvious that some of the companies involved had in mind merely short lines as alternatives to canals or turnpikes, but still as adjuncts to river navigation. This was true, for example, with respect to the first company chartered, the Franklin Railroad, which actually built a turnpike instead of a railroad from Nashville to Franklin. Some of the companies, however, had more grandiose designs, involving the establishment of rail connections with the Atlantic seaboard, which were in response to railroad activities currently developing in the Eastern states. And it was East Tennessee, the most isolated of the three grand divisions, but also the nearest to the Atlantic Ocean, which was the first to be afflicted—and also the most violently—with the railroad fever.

The first East Tennessean to be affected was the Knoxville physician-historian, Dr. James G. M. Ramsey. When the steamboat *Atlas* came to Knoxville in 1828, he welcomed it with a rather tactless speech, stating that the establishment of regular steamboat navigation to New Orleans, even if practicable, would not benefit East Tennessee. Instead it would subject the farmers and manufacturers of that section to the ruinous competition of the producers in the upper Mississippi Valley. The most logical market for East Tennessee was the Atlantic seaboard, at Charleston or Savannah. He journeyed to Charleston and was able to convince the promoters of South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company, chartered in 1827 to build a railroad from Charleston to the Savannah

* The state board originally established was abolished in 1831, and Middle and West Tennessee funds were apportioned among the counties to use as they wished. Among the uses to which they were put were subscriptions to the stock of turnpike companies, clearing streams, building courthouses, and supporting common schools.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Expressway

River at Hamburg (opposite Augusta, Georgia), that it would be to their interest to extend their line to the Tennessee River. Although he developed that thesis through letters to the *Charleston Mercury* which were reprinted in the *Knoxville Register*, the plan did not have much immediate success.*

Meanwhile, the residents of upper East Tennessee were becoming excited about the prospects of a rail and water connection northeastward through

* One of the six charters of 1831 was to the Knoxville and Southern Railroad, which planned to form a connection with the proposed line from Charleston.

Virginia to the Atlantic. In 1831 the Virginia legislature chartered the Lynchburg and New River Railroad to provide a continuation of the James River Canal by rail to the New River, a branch of the Ohio in southwestern Virginia. East Tennesseans immediately began an agitation in favor of an extension of this proposed line through their section to Knoxville. From July 4, 1831, to June 14, 1832, a newspaper called the *Rail-Road Advocate* was published in the little town of Rogersville to exploit that idea. This probably was the first railroad newspaper to be published in the United States. The states of Virginia and Tennessee,* however, refused to grant financial aid and the project collapsed. The *Rail-Road Advocate* also suspended publication, still proclaiming (June 14, 1832) that "Rail-Roads are the *only hope* of East Tennessee." The editor advised the people again to look in the direction of Charleston, which was waiting with outstretched arms.⁹

Meanwhile, the residents of Memphis had become interested in Charleston's outstretched arms. The South Carolina Railroad was completed to Hamburg in 1833 and for several years it was the longest railroad in the world. As early as 1831 its projectors were considering an extension to the Tennessee River at the head of the Muscle Shoals, in view of the fact that a company had been organized in Alabama to build a railroad around those obstructions.** Thus, when the Memphis Railroad Company was chartered by Tennessee in 1831, although its immediate aim was to relieve nearby planters from their dependence on miry West Tennessee roads leading to the Mississippi, the ultimate dream of its promoters was a rail connection with Charleston. This design was made clear by the new name of the company acquired in 1833—the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad. The resident of Memphis who was most active in promoting this abortive dream was Major General Edmund Pendleton Gaines, whose mind was filled with grandiose ideas of an extensive system of internal improvements as an aid to national defense. He also became a sponsor of another grand scheme—a railroad from Memphis to Baltimore, where it would connect with another pioneer American railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio. Through his connections with the War Department, he was able to secure the services of Major Stephen H. Long for the survey of both routes. Towns in the interior of Tennessee, such as Jackson and Columbia, became excited over the prospect of being stations on a railroad from the Mississippi to

* Tennessee merely gave a charter to the Lynchburg and New River Railroad (one of the six of 1831) authorizing it to extend its line to Knoxville. Although long delayed, the aim of a rail connection with the Middle Atlantic seaboard eventually was achieved in 1858 by the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad and its Virginia connections.

** This Tuscumbia, Courtland, and Decatur Railroad was completed in January, 1835. T. D. Clark, "The Building of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 9-13.

Chesapeake Bay.* Congressman James K. Polk received in 1834 enthusiastic letters from friends predicting that his home town of Columbia was destined to become the metropolis of Middle Tennessee, succeeding Nashville, which would be left with its steamboats high and dry on the banks of the Cumberland River.¹⁰

In 1835 Dr. Ramsey's idea of a rail connection between Knoxville and Charleston was revived as a part of a much larger project—a railroad from Charleston to Cincinnati. The initiative this time came from the "Queen City of the West," but the South Carolinians responded enthusiastically. Within a few months the Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston Railroad was incorporated in the two Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky.** To promote the undertaking a mammoth convention of nearly four hundred delegates representing nine states convened in Knoxville on July 4, 1836. After some debate the convention selected the difficult route over the mountains from North Carolina along the French Broad River to Knoxville and thence through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. The president of the convention, and also of the company, Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina, closed the proceedings with a toast: "The South and the West.—We have published the banns [marriage notice]—if any man know aught why these should not be joined together, let him speak now or forever hold his peace."*** The delegates from Georgia and lower East Tennessee were disappointed, however, that the easier route they had proposed, south of the mountain barrier, had been accepted merely as a possible branch road rather than as the main line. The Georgians were informed by the delegates from McMinn County, Tennessee, of the existence of a charter of the Hiwassee Railroad Company, granted in January, 1836, to build from Knoxville to the Georgia line with a view to connecting with the projected extension of the South Carolina Railroad to the Tennessee River. Consequently, they decided to initiate a project independent of the Cincinnati

* Involved in this project were the Western Railroad Company, chartered in 1833 to build from Jackson to the Mississippi, and the Columbia Railroad, one of the six companies chartered in 1831, with the original design of connecting that town with the Tennessee River at Carrollsville. The sixth company of 1831, the Clarksville and Russellville, like the Franklin Railroad, eventually compromised on a turnpike.

** The Kentucky legislature insisted on the inclusion of branches to Louisville and Maysville, in addition to the main line to Covington (opposite Cincinnati), and also the adding of Louisville to the corporate name.

*** Knoxville *Register*, July 13, 1836. Hayne became involved in a bitter dispute with his fellow nullificationist, John C. Calhoun, who preferred a connection with Memphis rather than Cincinnati, as a means of uniting the slave states; he was not interested in the Union-saving possibilities involved in an economic tie between the slave and free sections. J. B. Cleveland, *Controversy between John C. Calhoun and Robert Y. Hayne as to the Proper Route of a Railroad from South Carolina to the West* (Spartanburg, S. C., 1913).

and Charleston undertaking. The plan as presently developed was that the road already under construction by the Georgia Railroad Company westward from the Savannah River at Augusta (opposite the terminus of the Charleston and Hamburg line) should be extended to the Chattahoochee River (at Atlanta). There it was to meet other projected lines from Savannah, Milledgeville, and Columbus. The state of Georgia was to build at state expense a road from Atlanta to Ross' Landing (Chattanooga) to be called the Western and Atlantic. And the Hiwassee Railroad was to be built from Knoxville to a junction with the Western and Atlantic at Dalton, Georgia. Thus Knoxville would be supplied with two separate rail connections with Charleston.¹¹

The State-Stock System of 1836-1838—The development of interest throughout the state in railroad building led to the enactment of the second general law providing for state action for the improvement of transportation facilities. In February, 1836, several months before the Knoxville Convention, the legislature, following the injunction placed upon it by the constitutional convention of 1834 to encourage internal improvements, passed an act providing that the state should subscribe for one-third of the stock of all companies engaged in the construction of railroads or macadamized turnpikes. The inclusion of turnpikes was due to the insistence of the Middle Tennessee legislators. In this section, except for the temporary excitement in Columbia, mentioned above, and a short flurry of interest in a proposal of a railroad from New Orleans to Nashville, the railroad fever had not taken as strong a hold as in East and West Tennessee. More adequately supplied with steamboat navigation, Middle Tennesseans were chiefly interested in the building of highways to the shipping points on the major rivers. Even so, the law was passed by East and West Tennessee votes overcoming the opposition of a majority of the Middle Tennessee legislators, who feared the creation of a large state debt and a consequent increase in taxes. Somewhat less evident, though still noticeable, was the tendency of future Whigs to support the measure more wholeheartedly than the Democrats, who were in the minority in this legislature. Also, the anti-Jackson governor, Newton Cannon, strongly recommended the legislation. Equally significant was the influence of General Gaines, who came to Nashville to lobby for state aid for the building of a network of railroads.¹²

It soon became evident that the one-third system was inadequate. Only one railroad and three Middle Tennessee turnpike companies were able to obtain the "well secured" private subscriptions of the remaining two-thirds of the stock necessary to qualify for state aid. The railroad was the LaGrange and Memphis, chartered in 1835 as a successor of the Memphis and the Atlantic and Mississippi companies mentioned above. The limiting of its immediate aims to the building of a road from LaGrange to Memphis and a branch line to Somerville reduced its capitalization sufficiently to make it possible to obtain the necessary amount of private subscriptions. But to get these subscribers ac-

tually to pay for their stock was much more difficult. West Tennessee was still so young and poor that there arose in Madison County a movement in favor of the construction entirely at the expense of the state of a "Central Railroad" from the Mississippi to Bristol. The legislature appropriated \$15,000 for a survey of the route,* but this intersectional railroad never was constructed. The Hiwassee Railroad, under the presidency of Solomon D. Jacobs, although unable to qualify for the state subscription, did begin construction work in August, 1837, near Athens. According to one authority, this was "the first lick ever made in the state in the construction of a railroad."¹³ The Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston Railroad resorted to a banking scheme to keep the project alive. Under the authority of an amendment to its charter, it established a bank at Charleston and a branch, called the Southwestern Railroad Bank, at Knoxville. Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey quite appropriately was made president of the latter institution.¹⁴

As a consequence of the Panic of 1837, the legislature at its next session was bombarded with appeals for help from railroad and turnpike companies, and the legislators responded by increasing the amount of state subscriptions from one-third to one-half.** This result was achieved by a remarkable example of log-rolling on the part of the rival interests of internal improvements, banking, and education. The Bank and Improvement Act of 1838, as the law was called, satisfied the depression-caused need for increased banking facilities by creating the completely state-owned Bank of Tennessee. Its capital stock was to be raised mainly by the sale of state bonds, but it was to include also the entire common school fund of the state, to which was to be added all future receipts from the sale of public lands, as already promised in 1827. As will be discussed in a later chapter, the bank was required to set aside from its profits \$100,000 annually for the support of common schools and \$18,000 for academies. To satisfy the advocates of river improvement, who had been ignored in the 1836 law, \$300,000 in state bonds were to be issued for that purpose, to be divided equally among the three grand divisions of the state. In contrast to the previous law, under which the "sky was the limit," the act of 1838 provided that the maximum amount of state funds available for internal improvements was to be four million dollars, including the river bonds. The remaining amount of \$3,700,000 was to be made available for the state subscriptions for

* Similarly, an appropriation of \$5,000 was made as Tennessee's share of the cost of surveying the route of the Cincinnati and Charleston railway project. These amounts came from the state's allotment of federal surplus revenue distributed among the states in 1837. The remainder of the money was deposited in state banks, although the constitution of 1835 provided that any federal land revenue coming to Tennessee should be divided equally between education and internal improvements.

** The proportion of state representation on the boards of directors also was increased from one-third to one-half.

one-half of the stock of railroad and turnpike* companies, to be apportioned as follows: \$1,300,000 to East Tennessee, \$1,500,000 to Middle Tennessee, and \$900,000 to West Tennessee. At the request of the East Tennessee legislators, however, the whole of that section's share was to be divided equally between the Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston and the Hiwassee railroad companies. East Tennessee turnpike companies were not to be eligible for aid unless one of the railroads failed to qualify. The state subscriptions, instead of being paid in one lump sum when called for by the directors as under the previous law, were to be paid in proportion to the payments actually made by the private subscribers. This was due to the practice followed by some companies under the act of 1836 of calling immediately for the payment of all subscriptions in their entirety. The state would comply but the private subscribers usually would fail to do so. Thus the resources of the company would be limited largely to the funds supplied by the state. As was the case in 1836, the act was passed by East and West Tennessee votes over the strenuous opposition of Middle Tennessee legislators. Although the legislature was controlled by the Whigs, the members of that party in the two houses divided 35 to 31 in favor, whereas the Democrats cast 18 votes in favor of the bill and only 15 against.**15

Because of the seriousness of the economic depression, the state aid laws of 1836 were almost complete failures. The only tangible benefit was the construction of a number of turnpikes, most of them located in Middle Tennessee, which, ironically, had been most opposed to the legislation. The credit of the state also suffered severely. Only one million of the \$2,500,000 of six per cent state bonds for the capital of the bank could be sold; and the five per cent bonds for river improvement, which, like the bank bonds under the law could not be sold at less than par, could not be sold at all. The bonds issued to the railroad and turnpike companies in payment of the state subscriptions*** could be sold by those companies only at ruinous discounts. They were hawked about in the markets of the world and sold for whatever they would bring, in some cases as little as 50 cents on the dollar. Consequently, in 1840, during the administration of Governor James K. Polk, the state aid laws were repealed in so far as it was possible. Where state subscriptions had been made, the companies involved were still entitled to receive the bonds due from the state if

* Under the 1838 law a turnpike did not have to be macadamized to qualify. The change was for the benefit of West Tennessee, where macadamizing was difficult because of the lack of rocks.

** Some Democrats seem to have voted in favor, believing that the establishment of a state bank would handicap the Whig party program of trying to create a new national bank; but votes on striking out the internal improvement features of the bill were much more sectional than partisan in nature.

*** Those issued under the 1836 law carried an interest rate of $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent but those under the 1838 act only 5 per cent, which was a serious handicap.

they complied with the law. The repeal was carried by a large majority of both parties in this Democratic-controlled legislature.*

The railroad enterprises were the chief casualties of the depression. The Cincinnati and Charleston project was the first to collapse. The company was weakened by internal dissension and bitter controversy with the Hiwassee Railroad. Following the death of its inspired president, Robert Y. Hayne, in 1839, it surrendered its charter** and returned the small amount of state bonds it had received. There ensued a bitter struggle among prospective heirs for



(Courtesy Columbia—Mt. Pleasant Chamber of Commerce)

Columbia—Maury County Park

the inheritance of the \$650,000 state subscription, including the Hiwassee Railroad and several East Tennessee turnpike companies. The legislature, however, disappointed them all and cancelled the subscription. The Hiwassee Railroad, which had unsuccessfully attempted to consolidate with the Cincinnati and Charleston before its demise, hoping thereby to acquire its state subscription, struggled on until 1842 and then succumbed. It had succeeded, however, with the aid of \$357,000 in state bonds (sold for \$279,282.72), in grading about sixty-five miles of the road, building a bridge over the Hiwassee River, and starting an iron works at Charleston, Tennessee, for the manufacture of rails. As will be discussed presently, the work was resumed by a successor company and eventually completed in 1855.

The LaGrange and Memphis Railroad at first refused to accept the state-aid law of 1838 because it required actual payments by private subscribers as

* The chief exception was the vote of several East Tennessee Whigs in the house against repeal, probably because the Hiwassee Railroad was largely under Whig control.

** This involved also the end of the Southwestern Railroad Bank, which had been so well managed by Dr. Ramsey that it did not suspend specie payments despite the depression. Hesseltine (ed.), *Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters*, 35-37.

a precedent to the issuance of state bonds. Later it obtained a state subscription to one-half of its stock on its own terms and eventually received a total of \$216,250 in state bonds. Nevertheless, as one Memphis historian expressed it, "With a hamlet at one end, and an Indian trading station [LaGrange] of 240 inhabitants at the other, and an unsettled country intervening, what was to be expected but failure?"¹⁴ Under the leadership of its energetic president, Eastin Morris of LaGrange, it was able, however, to make a name for itself as the first company to operate a railroad train in Tennessee. By the end of 1841 it had graded the major portion of the road and laid the rails for a distance of about ten miles at the Memphis end. It acquired two passenger cars (stage coaches with flanged wheels) and seven "burden cars." Early in 1842 a locomotive arrived from Philadelphia and was escorted to the tracks by a brass band. At first the engineer was unable to get it started, but a few days later the train got under way and transported a handful of frightened passengers on a round trip to a turntable about six miles from Memphis. A few months later the sheriff of Shelby County took possession of the property because of unsatisfied court judgments.* After several years delay, a new company, the Memphis and Charleston, absorbed the LaGrange and Memphis and with the aid of connecting lines brought to reality in 1857 the dream of General Gaines and John C. Calhoun of a rail connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River.

As mentioned above, the only immediate benefits from the state-aid system of 1836-1838 came from turnpike construction. Twenty-four turnpike companies—nineteen in Middle Tennessee and five in West Tennessee—succeeded in qualifying for state subscriptions and eventually received a total of \$1,245,357 in state aid. A few of the companies failed, but the others managed to build more than four hundred miles of turnpikes. A state investigation revealed, however, that a considerable amount of fraud and corruption characterized their operations, and the dividends paid on the state stock were very insignificant. The most important of the turnpikes were those radiating from Nashville to neighboring towns, as they contributed greatly to the rise of the capital city, with its steamboat facilities, to a dominant economic position and to the blooming prosperity of the whole Nashville Basin. An unfortunate result was the accentuation of sectional antagonisms, since East and West Tennessee had received little or no benefit from the state subsidies. In 1841-42 separate statehood movements** arose in both of these sections, and although other

* The company also had become involved in John C. McLemore's speculative scheme to build up the community of Fort Pickering as a rival of Memphis. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 236-37; Williams, *West Tennessee*, 173; Brooks, "Early Plans for Railroads," 34-36; Clark, "Building of the Memphis and Charleston," 14.

** Andrew Johnson introduced a resolution for a new state of "Frankland" in East Tennessee, and John A. Gardner of Weakley County one for a new state to be called "Jacksoniana" in West Tennessee. Williams, *State of Franklin*, 77-78.

issues were involved, the disparity of internal improvement benefits was a contributing factor. This is well illustrated by a speech delivered by a West Tennessee representative, David Fentress, during the debate in January-February, 1842, on a bill which cancelled the unsold river bonds issued in 1838:

Yes, it may be said, with propriety, what was said of old Rome, "every road leads to Nashville." Yet the people of the most remote parts of the State have to pay their proportion of the taxes, raised to build these fine roads, though they may never have seen the *beautiful* City of Nashville.

He ventured a prophecy that if the selfish Middle Tennesseans denied the "provinces" their paltry river funds, there would appear in the Western District a "Peter, the Hermit" and in East Tennessee an "Attila, the Hun" who would "preach a crusade" and lead an avenging host that would "devastate and waste your Palestine!"¹⁷ The Middle Tennesseans were sufficiently frightened that they permitted the appropriation from the treasury of \$200,000 for river improvement, to be divided equally between East and West Tennessee.

It should be kept in mind that many other states expanded recklessly in the fields of banking and internal improvements during the same period, and several of them defaulted on the payment of the interest on their bonds, a few of them even repudiating their debts entirely. It is to the credit of Tennessee that she courageously increased taxes and maintained the payment of the interest on the two million dollar debt incurred and eventually retired the bonds without resort to repudiation.¹⁸

State Loans and Railroad Construction—For several years after the collapse of the railroad enterprises aided under the state-stock system Tennesseans were not interested in that new type of transportation. During the latter part of the decade of the 1840's, however, interest rapidly revived. This was largely because of the progress being made in railroad construction in neighboring states, especially in Georgia. With the recovery from the economic depression, work was resumed on the Georgia lines leading to Chattanooga whose initiation had earlier aroused interest in East and West Tennessee. The Georgia Railroad was completed from Augusta to Atlanta in the fall of 1845, thus completing the rail connection from Charleston* to Atlanta. A railroad from the seaport of Savannah reached Atlanta early the next year. By the end of 1849 the Western and Atlantic was completed from Atlanta to Chattanooga, except for a tunnel near Dalton which was opened in May of 1850. Meanwhile, a locomotive and cars had been hauled in wagons around the uncompleted tunnel, and the first train chugged into Chattanooga on December 1, 1849,

* It will be recalled that the South Carolina Railroad from Charleston to Hamburg (across the Savannah River from Augusta) had been completed in 1833.

to be received by a rousing welcome. As the rails approached Chattanooga the hope of connecting with them was revived in Knoxville and Memphis, and a similar hope arose in Nashville, where earlier little interest had been shown. State pride also was involved. In 1850 a national publication, the *Railroad Gazette*, published some statistics giving the estimated mileage of Southern railroads in operation on January 1 of that year: Georgia, 631; Alabama, 111; Mississippi, 98; Kentucky, 28; and Tennessee, 0.* The two sessions of the Southern and Western Convention held in Memphis in July and November of 1845 also greatly stimulated interest in railroad building in the South and West. The second session, presided over by John C. Calhoun, attracted six or seven hundred delegates from sixteen states and territories. Within the next three or four years the Tennessee legislature had chartered the Nashville and Chattanooga, the Memphis and Charleston, and the East Tennessee and Georgia railroad companies, designed to connect Nashville, Memphis, and Knoxville, respectively, with the Georgia and South Carolina roads leading to the Atlantic Coast at Charleston and Savannah.

At first the railroad promoters argued that the roads could be built by private enterprise without resort to governmental assistance, but it was not long before appeals were being made for state aid. This was especially true after the federal government in 1850 inaugurated a system of granting to public-land states generous grants of federal land in aid of railroad construction. Tennessee, however, had no federal lands, and the burden therefore fell more heavily upon the state government. The legislature began slowly and hesitatingly in 1848 with the offer to endorse company bonds issued by the Nashville and Chattanooga and the East Tennessee and Georgia companies to the amounts of \$500,000 and \$350,000, respectively. It was expected that the state endorsement would enable the companies to sell their bonds at par, whereas without it they would not be able to dispose of them except at ruinous discounts. This was the case with the Nashville and Chattanooga company, which built its road without obtaining any other type of direct aid from the state. The East Tennessee and Georgia, however, refused the state's endorsement and two years later succeeded in obtaining a direct loan in state bonds of the same amount, thus providing a precedent for the general system of state aid enacted two years later.

After the General Assembly of 1849-50, controlled by Democrats, refused to pass that type of a general law, the question of state aid became a major issue in the election of 1851. By that time a great number of railroad enterprises were being projected in many parts of the state, and this fact contributed to the election of a legislature more friendly to the idea of granting

* Actually, as mentioned above, a few miles of the Georgia-owned Western and Atlantic were in operation in Tennessee, from Chattanooga to the end of the uncompleted tunnel.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Looking South Across the Mississippi

governmental assistance.* The General Internal Improvement Law of 1852 provided for state loans to railroad companies in the form of six per cent bonds at the rate of \$8,000 per mile (increased to \$10,000 in 1854) to be used exclusively for acquiring and putting down the rails and obtaining necessary equipment. To be eligible for a loan a company had to show that it had bona fide subscriptions of stock sufficient to grade and bridge the whole line and that one section of thirty (later ten) miles, beginning at one terminus, was ready for the laying of the rails. It could then obtain the bonds for that section and as other sections were completed additional allotments of bonds would be available.** The companies were required to pay the interest on the loan semiannually, and beginning five years after the road was completed to make annual payments into a sinking fund to enable the state to retire the bonds at maturity. The state also was to have a lien on the property of the railroads until the loans were repaid. In 1854 the legislature authorized additional loans to assist in the construction of bridges over any of the major rivers in the state, of \$100,000 for each bridge. With the exception of the Nashville and Chattanooga, practically every railroad incorporated in Tennessee before the Civil War was granted aid under this system. Indirect aid was provided by authorizing counties and municipalities to subscribe for stock of railroad companies, subject to a referendum, and by exemption from taxation of state, county, and municipal bonds issued in aid of railroad construction.¹⁹

The first railroad completed in Tennessee was the Nashville and Chattanooga. The incorporation of the company, in December, 1845, was the result of a vigorous campaign waged by Dr. James Overton and A. O. P. Nicholson of Nashville to overcome the indifference of a city apparently wedded to steamboat navigation. They were aided by the state geologist, Dr. Gerard Troost, who made a report concerning the feasibility of the road and the abundance of mineral resources, especially coal, along the route. The Memphis conventions of 1845 also created a fear that the establishment of a rail connection between that city and Charleston would take much of the trade of lower Middle Tennessee away from Nashville. From the organization of the company, until long after its completion, Vernon K. Stevenson served as president, and he was the real builder of the road. He and ex-Governor James C. ("Lean Jimmy") Jones were adept stock salesmen, obtaining subscriptions

* The partisan victory of William B. Campbell (for governor) and the Whigs over William Trousdale and the Democrats was due also to Whig support of the Compromise of 1850 as passed by Congress.

** The law prohibited the sale of the bonds at less than par and authorized the appointment of a state commissioner to assist the companies in disposing of them. The latter provision was not customarily used, however, although under the 1850 law Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey had served as state agent for the sale of the \$350,000 issued to the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. Hasseltine (ed.), *Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters*, 25-32.

from the city of Charleston and the Georgia Railroad Company, as well as from Nashville and many towns and counties along the route. To avoid much of the mountain barrier, the route chosen dipped down into Alabama and approached Chattanooga along the Tennessee River. The road was completed to the river at Bridgeport, Alabama, by the beginning of 1853 and to Chattanooga in January, 1854. As mentioned above, the only aid received from the state was the endorsement of the company's bonds; the total amount was \$1,500,000. With the aid of booming business during the Civil War, the company was able to pay off the bonds when they came due. Thus the Nashville and Chattanooga was not only the first Tennessee road completed but also the only one which the state aided without suffering any financial loss.

Before the war the Nashville and Chattanooga became closely associated with some branch lines, most of which it later absorbed. One was the McMinnville and Manchester, which was completed from Tullahoma to McMinnville in 1857. The extension to Sparta was not made until after the war. The original aim of the Winchester and Alabama, as the name indicates, was a connection with the projected Memphis and Charleston Railroad at Huntsville, Alabama. But when the road reached the Alabama line from Decherd and Winchester, it was diverted northwestward to Fayetteville, and the connection with Huntsville was not made until after the war. Another important branch, to the coal mines of the Sewanee Mining Company near Tracy City, when completed in 1855 provided Nashville with a regular and cheap supply of coal. To satisfy the terms of the subscription by the town of Shelbyville to the stock of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, the company built a short branch to it from Wartrace. Very closely associated with the Nashville and Chattanooga was the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad, which after 1856 had the same president, V. K. Stevenson. Projected to run from Nashville to the Mississippi River at Hickman, Kentucky, it had been built eastward from Hickman as far as McKenzie in Carroll County before the war began. But at the eastern end it had been built only a few miles from Nashville before the Union army took over and continued it to the Tennessee River at Johnsonville as a war measure. Shortly after the gap between the river and McKenzie was filled during the postwar years, the Nashville and Northwestern was absorbed by the Nashville and Chattanooga in 1872, and the combination assumed its modern name, the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad, usually abbreviated to N. C. & St. L.²⁰

The Memphis and Charleston Railroad was incorporated on February 2, 1846, but it did not make much progress until another railroad convention was held in Memphis in 1849 and "Lean Jimmy" Jones appeared on the scene to help get the project off the ground. As the first president of the company, he was able to do for the Memphis and Charleston what he had helped Stevenson do for the Nashville and Chattanooga—sell stock in widely separated

places. In New Orleans he argued that the building of the road would greatly increase the amount of cotton which would be shipped down the Mississippi. In Charleston, however, he confidently predicted that the establishment of a rail connection with the Atlantic Ocean would divert most of the Mississippi River trade to Charleston.* As mentioned above, the Memphis and Charleston absorbed the old LaGrange and Memphis company and made good use of the construction work it had done. It also took over the railroad which had been built around the Muscle Shoals. For some time Mississippi held up the work by refusing to grant a charter except on the terms that the road should go through Holly Springs. Eventually, this restriction was removed, and the original route was followed, cutting across merely the northeast corner of Mississippi by way of Corinth. The road was completed to Stevenson, Alabama, in March, 1857, and since arrangements had been made to use the tracks of the Nashville and Chattanooga for the remainder of the distance to Chattanooga, the rail connection between Memphis and the Atlantic seaboard was now complete. On May 1 a "marriage" ceremony was performed at Memphis, with the mayors of Charleston and Memphis serving as proxies in the betrothal of the "Old Ocean" and the "Father of Waters." Then a barrel of ocean water was pumped into the Mississippi River, to the cheers of a crowd of 25,000 spectators. Some time later the ceremony was repeated at Charleston, where the fresh water of the Mississippi River was mingled with the salt water of the Atlantic Ocean. Eventually (1892), the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, since it came under the control of the E.T., Va., & Ga., after the war, became a part of the Southern Railway system.²¹

Another part of the present Southern which was built before the Civil War brought to reality the early (1831) dream of East Tennesseans of seeing a railroad through their section which would connect at each end with lines leading to the Atlantic seaboard—through Georgia and Virginia, respectively. This aim was achieved by two companies, the East Tennessee and Georgia and the East Tennessee and Virginia (meeting at Knoxville), which were consolidated in 1869 under the name East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia (E.T., Va., & Ga.) As mentioned above, the East Tennessee and Georgia was a revival of the Hiwassee Railroad, which before its collapse in 1842 had made a good beginning in the effort to build a railroad from Dalton, Georgia (on the route of the Western and Atlantic from Atlanta to Chattanooga) to Knoxville. Following the successful termination in 1846 of a suit brought against it by the state, the company was reorganized with T. Nixon Van Dyke as president and obtained its new name and a new charter in 1848. With the aid of new

* Actually, as soon as the Western and Atlantic Railroad was completed, it began to carry large amounts of cotton toward the seaboard. James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga: A Rail Junction of the Old South," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (September, 1947), 249.

subscriptions and state loans, it was able to complete the construction of the road from Dalton by way of Athens and Blair's Ferry (Loudon) to Knoxville in June, 1855.* Thus, under the presidency of the energetic Campbell Wallace, it became the second railroad completed in Tennessee. In 1858 a "branch road" (now the main line of the Southern) from Cleveland to Chattanooga was completed, which avoided the roundabout route from Knoxville to Dalton and then back to Chattanooga on the Western and Atlantic.

The incorporation of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad on January 27, 1848, resulted from a convention at Greeneville in 1847 which became involved in a dispute between railroad and river improvement interests. The legislature, however, failed to carry out the compromise recommendations of the convention—a state subscription to the railroad company and an appropriation of \$250,000 for the improvement of the Holston and French Broad rivers.** With great difficulty the supporters of the railroad succeeded in getting enough subscriptions to organize the company in 1849, and Dr. Samuel B. Cunningham of Jonesboro was elected president. To advance the project a group of Jonesboro citizens began the publication of the *Rail Road Journal* in 1850. Jonesboro and Greeneville became involved in a bitter controversy with Rogersville (the home of the earlier paper, the *Rail-Road Advocate*) and other communities on the other side of Bay's Mountain over the location of the route. The eastern route won, and the Carter's Valley people had to be satisfied with a branch line, built by a separate company from Bull's Gap to Rogersville, which was not completed until after the war. When the East Tennessee and Virginia was opened throughout its entire length from Knoxville to Bristol in May, 1858, it filled a gap in completed rail lines extending from such Eastern cities as Boston, New York, and Washington all the way to Atlanta, Charleston, Savannah, Montgomery, Nashville, and Memphis. Soon there would be through connections with Louisville, New Orleans, and Mobile. East Tennessee's "isolated condition" at last had been ended.***²²

* In August, 1855, after the completion of both the Nashville and Chattanooga and the East Tennessee and Georgia, 150,000 bushels of wheat were shipped over the Western Atlantic, some of it destined for Northern markets. *Nashville Republican Banner*, August 25, September 12, 1855.

** Interest in river navigation had been aroused west of the Holston by the success of a steamboat in nearly reaching Kingsport in 1847, made possible by the river appropriation of 1842.

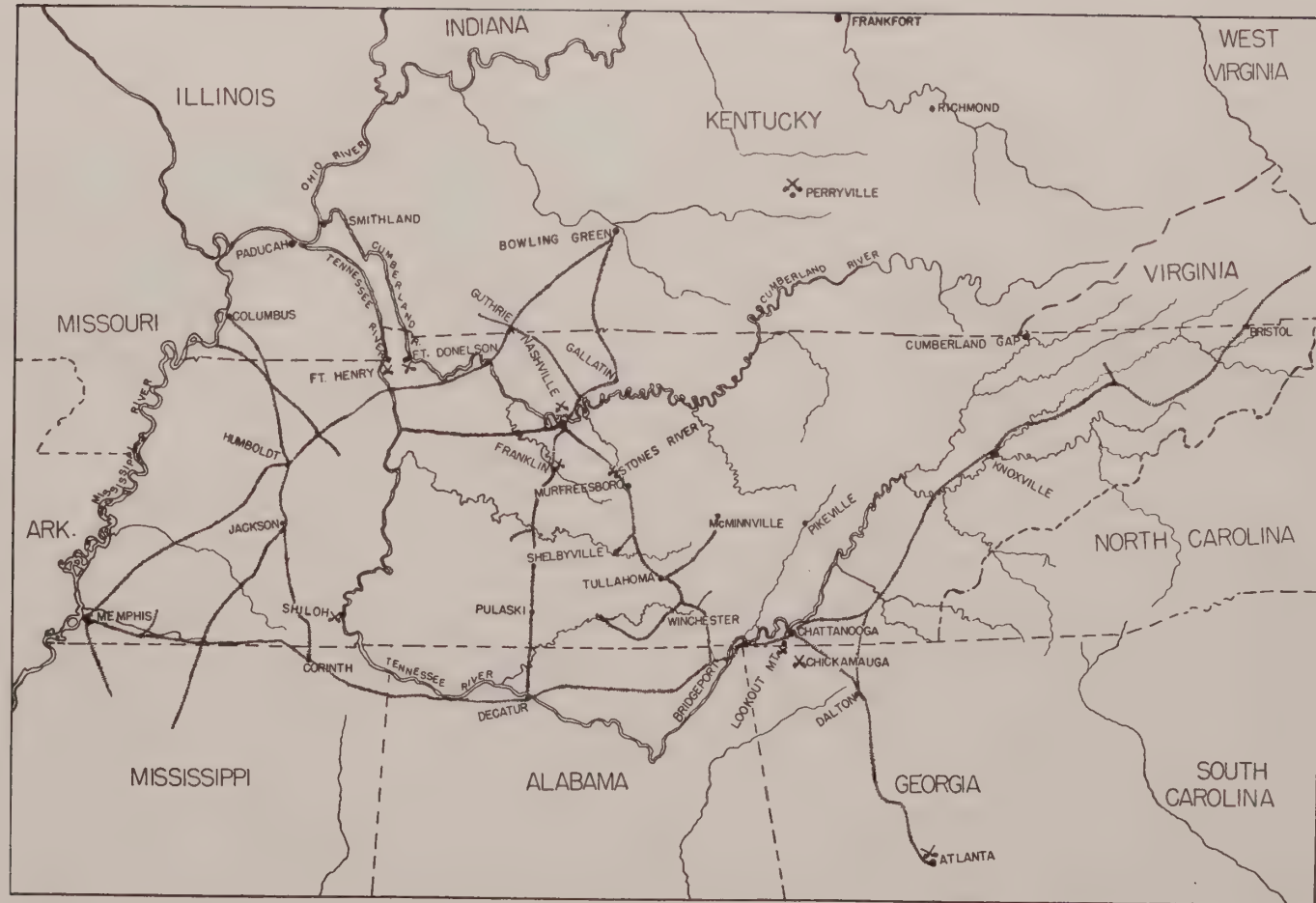
*** Before the war some other East Tennessee companies had made some slight beginnings in railroad construction with the aid of state loans. They were absorbed and some of them completed by the E.T., Va., & Ga. in the postwar years. Included was the ultimate achievement of the "grant design" of the Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston. The Knoxville and Charleston, designed to connect with the Rabun Gap Railroad of South Carolina, stopped after reaching Maryville, sixteen miles from Knoxville; but the Cincinnati, Cumberland Gap, and

Another railroad system of great importance in Tennessee is the Louisville and Nashville, familiarly known as the L. & N. A considerable proportion of it was constructed before the Civil War. The initiative for the construction of the main line, between the cities in its name, came from Louisville, which feared that other cities would capture its Southern markets. The company was first incorporated in Kentucky on March 5, 1850, and it had some difficulty in obtaining a Tennessee charter. It was financed largely by a million dollar subscription by the city of Louisville and state aid under Tennessee's general laws. Its route in Tennessee was determined by the amounts subscribed by local governments along the alternative routes, and Gallatin and Sumner County won the contest. Completed on the eve of secession, in October, 1859, it was viewed as a link binding together the North and the South. The legislatures of Tennessee and Kentucky met in Louisville and then joined in a Union-saving excursion to Columbus, Ohio. Eloquent Unionist speeches were made by political leaders of Tennessee who not long thereafter were to be identified with the Confederate States of America.

Other parts of the present L. & N. system were built by other companies, which were absorbed by the L. & N. after the Tennessee state-aid system collapsed during the Reconstruction period. One line, built by two companies, the Tennessee and Alabama and the Central Southern, was completed before the war from Nashville southward through Columbia and Pulaski to the southern boundary of the state, where it met an Alabama road from Decatur on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The Tennessee and Alabama company planned to build from Columbia southwestward to a connection with the Memphis and Charleston below the Muscle Shoals,* but reached only to Mt. Pleasant before the war began. The line was completed to Sheffield by the L. & N. some time after the war. Another road later acquired by the L. & N. in which Middle Tennessee was greatly interested was the Edgefield and Kentucky. It was completed from Edgefield, a suburb of Nashville across the Cumberland

Charleston was nearly completed from Morristown, on the E.T. & Va., to the North Carolina line before the war, and it eventually attained a connection by way of Asheville with the Atlantic seaboard in 1881. The Knoxville and Kentucky, nearly completed to Clinton before the war, after troublous postwar years, eventually was completed as a part of the E.T., Va., and Ga. to a connection with a branch of the L. and N. at Jellico in 1883. Meanwhile, Cincinnati had already achieved a rail connection with Charleston, and also with a network of Southwestern lines, by the completion of the Cincinnati Southern Railway to Chattanooga in December, 1879. Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 226-33; R. O. Biggs, "The Cincinnati Southern Railway: A Municipal Enterprise," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 7 (1935), 81-102.

* Its earlier aim had been to connect with a railroad from New Orleans, but that road shifted its design to a connection with the Mobile and Ohio at Jackson, Tennessee.



(From "The Story of Tennessee," by Parks and Folmsbee, Harlow Pub. Co., Okla. City, Okla.)

The War Between The States

Only the most important battle sites are marked. A number of skirmishes and small engagements took place. The railroads as they were in 1864 are shown. The only great battles which took place in Eastern Tennessee were those near Chattanooga.

River, northwestward to the Kentucky line at Guthrie early in 1860. There it was to meet a Kentucky road from Henderson, but this line through western Kentucky coal fields was not finished until after the war. The Edgefield and Kentucky, however, did connect at Guthrie with another part of the future L. & N. system which was completed just as the war was beginning—the so-called “air-line” route from Memphis to Louisville. It was built by the Memphis and Ohio from Memphis to Paris, by the Memphis, Clarksville, and Louisville from Paris to Guthrie, and by the L. & N. itself, which built a branch line from Bowling Green to Guthrie.²³

Before the Civil War West Tennesseans had also acquired rail connections with Mobile, New Orleans, and Columbus, Kentucky, as a result of the work of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and a group of companies which are now included in the Illinois Central system. Involved was a race between Mobile and New Orleans in their efforts to achieve a connection by railroad with the mouth of the Ohio River. The aim of Mobile was to divert to its port much of the traffic going down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. The activities of the citizens of the “Crescent City” were designed not only to counteract that effort but also the influence of the Memphis and Charleston and other railroads in diverting traffic from “Old Man River.” As finally located, the Mobile and Ohio entered Tennessee just north of Corinth, Mississippi, where it connected with the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, and proceeded northwardly through Jackson and Trenton in the direction of Columbus, Kentucky, below the mouth of the Ohio. There it made connection by ferry with Cairo, the terminus of the Illinois Central Railroad from Chicago. The section from Columbus to Jackson, Tennessee, was completed by the end of 1858, but the longer portion between Jackson and Mobile was not finished until April 22, 1861, ten days after the Civil War had begun.

Meanwhile, the New Orleans, Jackson, and Great Northern Railroad had been completed through Jackson, Mississippi, to Canton; and the line was continued by Mississippi Central Railroad to Grand Junction, where the Memphis and Charleston crossed the Tennessee-Mississippi state line, and by the Mississippi Central and Tennessee Railroad to a connection with the Mobile and Ohio at Jackson, Tennessee. The line was completed in January, 1860. Thus, by using the completed section of the Mobile and Ohio from Jackson to Columbus, New Orleans had the benefit of rail communication with the Northwest more than a year before its rival, Mobile. Also, the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad built a line from Memphis to Grenada, Mississippi, on the Mississippi Central, which as it progressed southeastward gave the planters of northwestern Mississippi easier access to the river port of Memphis, and which when completed in July, 1861, gave Memphis a direct rail connection with New Orleans. The Illinois Central came into possession of this whole system of roads after the war, and in December, 1873, it completed the building of

the "Cairo Extension," from Jackson, Tennessee, to Cairo, which released it from its dependence on the Mobile and Ohio.*²⁴

The people of Memphis and West Tennessee, and even other parts of the state, became very much interested in the Pacific railroad movement, which aroused a great amount of national attention in the years following Asa Whitney's proposal of the idea in the 1840's. During the next decade the claims of Memphis as the most logical point for the crossing of the Mississippi River were advanced with enthusiasm. In 1855-1856 the Tennessee legislature instructed the state's members of Congress to vote to support a route by way of Memphis, Little Rock, and El Paso, and it authorized the state's endorsement of \$350,000 in bonds issued by the city of Memphis in aid of the Memphis and Little Rock Railroad, not one mile of which was located in Tennessee. In 1859 a mammoth convention in Memphis adopted a resolution in favor of the same route, but the Civil War ruined any chances it may have had of being selected.²⁵ In the war, however, the approximately twelve hundred miles of railroads which had been built in Tennessee during the decade of the 1850's played a very significant role in military strategy. They also had great potentialities for improvement and expansion of the state's economy, but those results, only partially realized before the war, were postponed by that struggle and by the difficulties of reconstruction.

* A Kentucky company, the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad, had built by 1858 a road from Paducah to a connection with the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad three miles east of Union City, Tennessee. The road was extended to Memphis by 1873 and was acquired by the Illinois Central in 1897. Brooks, "Trunk Line Railroads in West Tennessee," 120.

CHAPTER XIX.—NOTES

1. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 385-87; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 23-25; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 154-59; R. L. Kincaid, "The Wilderness Road in Tennessee," E. T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 20 (1948), 37-48; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 118-25, 187-89, II, 19-20; Dawson A. Phelps, "The Natchez Trace in Tennessee History," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XIII (September, 1954), 195-203.
2. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 387-90; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 25-31; Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 201-15; Gauding, "Water Transportation in East Tennessee," 1-45; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 109-10, 453-55, 513, 571-74.
3. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 390-92; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 13-14; 36-44, 50-75. Gauding, "Water Transportation in East Tennessee," 52-77; T. J. Campbell, *The Upper Tennessee* (Chattanooga, 1932), 6; Williams, *West Tennessee*, 165-68; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 213, 261-62.
4. Williams, *West Tennessee*, 80; William E. Beard, "A Saga of the Western Waters," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, II (December, 1943), 316-30; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 392-93.

5. *Ibid.*, 393-95; Davidson, *The Tennessee*, I, 230-54; J. H. Alldredge, *et al.*, *A History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System*, 75 Cong., 1 Sess., *House Document* No. 254; Gauding, "Water Transportation in East Tennessee," 78-101; Campbell, *The Upper Tennessee, passim*; Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 90-100.
6. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 70-78.
7. *Ibid.*, 62-68.
8. *Ibid.*, 78-84; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 395-97; White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 288-90, 417-21.
9. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 84-91; "The Beginnings of the Railroad Movement in East Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 81-87; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 399-404; William B. Hesseltine (ed.), *Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters* (Nashville, 1954), 17-23.
10. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 91-100; James W. Silver, "Edmund Pendleton Gaines: Railroad Propagandist," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 9 (1937), 3-9; St. George L. Sioussat, "Memphis as a Gateway to the West," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, III (March, 1917), 1-27; Addie Lou Brooks, "Early Plans for Railroads in West Tennessee, 1830-1845," *ibid.*, 2nd ser., III (October, 1932), 20-39; U. B. Phillips, *A History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt to 1860* (New York, 1908), 132-69; S. M. Derrick, *Centennial History of the South Carolina Railroad* (Columbia, S. C., 1930), 1-70.
11. *Ibid.*, 131-51; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 116-20, 131-34; "Beginnings of the Railroad Movement," 87-89; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 404-05; James Wendell Holland, "Railroad Enterprise in East Tennessee, 1836-1860" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1930), 4-42, 63-79, 99-108; Phillips, *History of Transportation*, 182-84, 221-23, 301-06.
12. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 112-31; Abernethy, "Origin of the Whig Party in Tennessee," 504-22; Silver, "Edmund Pendleton Gaines," 10-11; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 409-10; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 60-88, 110-13.
13. Killebrew and Safford, *Introduction to Resources*, 311.
14. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 131-61; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 410-13; Hesseltine (ed.), *Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters*, 23-24; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 144-55, 165-72, 224-30.
15. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 162-76; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 413-15; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 181-213.
16. Keating, *History of Memphis*, 186.
17. *Nashville Whig*, February 8, 1842.
18. The preceding paragraphs are based on the detailed discussion in Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 177-267. See also Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 415-20; Holland, "Railroad Enterprise," 78-98, 109-48; Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 100-105; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, *passim*.
19. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 421-26; Sioussat, "Memphis as a Gateway to the West," 77-114; Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga County*, 129-36; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, *passim*; S. J. Folmsbee "The Origins of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 6 (1934), 81-95.
20. *Ibid.*; T. D. Clark, "The Development of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, 2nd ser., III (April, 1935), 160-68; Jesse Burt, Jr., "The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, 1854-1872," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 23 (1951), 58-76; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 426-34, 439.

21. *Ibid.*, 441-44; T. D. Clark, "The Building of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 9-25; Addie Lou Brooks, "The Building of Trunk Line Railroads in West Tennessee, 1852-1861," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (June, 1942), 100-103, 108-13.
22. These East Tennessee developments are well treated in three works by Holland: "Railroad Enterprise," 142-349; "The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, 1836-1860," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 3 (1931), 89-107; "The Building of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad," *ibid.*, No. 4 (1932), 83-101. See also Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 448-54, and the writer's chapters (9 and 19) in Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*.
23. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 433-39; T. D. Clark, *The Beginning of the L & N* (Louisville, 1933); K. A. Herr, *The Louisville and Nashville Railroad* (Louisville, 1943), *passim*; Madison Bratton, "The Unionist Junket of the Tennessee and Kentucky Legislatures in January, 1860," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 7 (1935), 64-80 Brooks, "Trunk Line Railroads in West Tennessee," 116-19.
24. *Ibid.*, 113-16; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 446-47; Thomas D. Clark, *A Pioneer Southern Railroad, from New Orleans to Cairo* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1936).
25. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 445-46; Brooks, "Trunk Line Railroads in West Tennessee," 104-08.

CHAPTER XX

Growth of Churches and Development of Sectarianism

1801-1861

THAT A GENERAL DERELICTION of religion followed the Revolutionary War was observed in an earlier chapter, but the pendulum of public sentiment swung in the opposite direction with the Great Revival of 1800. This movement began at the turn of the century under the forceful preaching of James McGready (Presbyterian) and John McGee (Methodist), and was participated in by Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians who found surcease from the tedium of frontier life in outbursts of excessive religiosity. When influential ministers of the last-named denomination refused to participate, the dynamic movement swept from the Presbyterian fold many erstwhile devout members of that faith. Most of them joined the newly formed Cumberland Presbyterian Church, some joined the Stone and Campbell movements, and others fell in line with the Methodists and Baptists. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century the Presbyterian church was harassed by strife and defections. The Methodists and Baptists did not stand aloof from the revival and both—the Methodists, especially—increased their membership by their vigorous participation. Nevertheless, this did not prevent them from having dissension and division within their folds also. In this chapter we propose to discuss the development not only of the three major denominations, but also the formation, growth, and expansion of new religious bodies which resulted from divisions within the old. Also, reference will be made to the groups with relatively small memberships in Tennessee, including the Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, and Judaic churches. Finally, reference will be given to Negro churches.

Presbyterians—As mentioned earlier, Presbyterian leaders such as Gideon Blackburn, Samuel Doak, Thomas Craighead, and James McGready had been among the first ministers to preach in Tennessee. At the turn of the century McGready's "coarse, tremulous voice" had led Tennesseans and Kentuckians to the camp meetings and the "mourner's bench." Despite their initial success Presbyterians soon alleged that too much emotionalism and insincerity dominated the camp meetings, and a division resulted over whether they should participate in the Great Revival.

Those who desired to remain aloof based their decision largely on these grounds: the revival was carried on in a disorderly, uncouth, and undignified manner—especially objectionable was McGready's practice of passing "up and down the aisles exhorting sinners individually" to profess faith; it afforded opportunities to preachers who did not have proper education and ordination; and there was a democratization of Calvinism—the implication that "Christ died for all" was contrary to the orthodox Calvinistic dogma that only the "elect" were recipients of redeeming grace.¹

A strict interpretation of Calvinism and the insistence that a minister should have a Bachelor of Arts degree hindered frontier Presbyterian leaders from the beginning. Men who fought for political freedom had little difficulty in extending their concepts of independence to cover religious preferences. People whose self-reliance had enabled them to clear frontier land and hold it against Indian assaults to the extent that they claimed "every acre had been bought with drops of blood," were reluctant to embrace a Calvinistic God who cared only for his foreordained elect. Many other factors, such as the influence of the enlightenment, the rise of the Methodist and perfectionist groups, and the growing insistence upon simplicity and informality in worship services had caused disagreements among frontier Baptists and Presbyterians long before the revival began.²

Two serious divisions occurred in the Presbyterian church as a result of the dissension. One—the Cumberland Presbyterian—began in the Cumberland Presbytery located in southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee; the other, the Cane Ridge Revival in northern Kentucky, was known by various names, such as the New Lights, Stoneites, Marshallites, Christians, and Disciples. Leaders of the two did not work together, although Barton W. Stone, a leader in the Cane Ridge Revival did spend much time in the Cumberland area observing the camp meetings. The mother church emerged from the affrays substantially weakened and "bleeding at every pore."³

1. *Cumberland Presbyterians*—The Cumberland schism began in 1801 when ministers in the Transylvania Presbytery sympathetic to the revival licensed* several men who had not acquired the proper theological training. This action came only after the ministers received repeated requests from congregations destitute of preachers, and only then had licensure been conferred upon three men who were accepted "exhorters and catechists" and who had been examined on "experimental religion and divinity." In 1802 the area designated as the Transylvania Presbytery, which had included all of Kentucky and parts of Tennessee and Ohio, was divided to form the Cumberland Presbytery, which now embraced Middle Tennessee and a part of central Kentucky. The revival group secured control of the new Presbytery and proceeded in 1803-1804 to ordain the licentiates—among whom were

* Under the Presbyterian form of government a license confers upon the recipient only the right to preach. A licentiate is not permitted to preside at the communion table or to exercise any other official function of the ministry.



(Photo by Ralph D. Whitesell)

Plaque in yard of Bethberei Church, Marshall County's Oldest House of Worship

Finis Ewing and Samuel King—and by 1805 had ordained or licensed twenty-four others.⁴

During the next five years both laymen and ministers argued doctrinal matters and the respective rights and powers of presbyteries and synods. The doctrinal bone of contention was that a few members of the revival party had been ordained but permitted to adopt the Presbyterian Confession of Faith without including "the high and mysterious doctrine of election and reprobation," which the revival group contended was the same as "fatality." To the revivalists, the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination was fatalistic and therefore inconsistent with all they had seen and known on the American frontier. By 1810, after an adverse decision by the General Assembly,* only three ordained members of the revival group—Ewing, King, and Samuel McAdow—remained loyal to the stand taken earlier. On February 3, 1810, Ewing and King, together with a licentiate named Ephraim McLean, visited McAdow in Middle Tennessee** and discussed the advisability of forming an independent Cumberland Presbytery. They had considered union with the Methodists and other bodies, but they had been discour-

* The General Assembly is the highest court and legislative body of the Presbyterian organization.

** The home area, now embraced within the Montgomery Bell State Park, is maintained as a shrine by the Cumberland Presbyterians.

aged. On the following day, after a night of prayer and discussion, the men organized an independent Cumberland Presbytery, adopted a constitution which accepted the Presbyterian Confession of Faith but gave ministers the right to make exception to the doctrine of "fatality," and ordained McLean. They pledged to continue to seek reconciliation with the Presbyterian Church, but admitted that unless it could be achieved by October, 1810, no further effort would be made.⁵

Ewing, King, and McAdow apparently had no intention of breaking away permanently from the Presbyterians. Regardless of their intention, however, they had formed the nucleus of a new religious body—the Cumberland Presbyterians. Efforts to effect reconciliation by October were unavailing, and they, with McAdow as moderator, issued a circular letter in which they showed the "origin, progress, and termination" of the difficulties that brought about their organization. In 1811 the dissenters made a final effort to unite with the parent church. A committee met with delegates from Kentucky and the West Tennessee Presbytery "to confer on the subject of reunion." In the following year they prepared a resolution stating that "every reasonable effort to be reunited to the general Presbyterian church" had been made. In April, 1813, apparently all hope had been abandoned, and two new presbyteries, Logan in Kentucky and Elk in Tennessee, were formed. The Cumberland Presbytery was centered at Nashville, and later was called "Nashville Presbytery." In October, 1813, delegates from the three presbyteries met in Sumner County near Gallatin and organized a synod. By this time the faith had approximately twenty-five ministers and sixty congregations. The Methodist circuit rider system was adopted, and Finis Ewing and others did much to organize new churches. Ewing, who in 1818 wrote of a revival in Lebanon as "literally a gospel sweeping shower," by that date had preached and established churches in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, and Missouri. By 1861 ninety-one presbyteries had been formed, sixty-nine of which were in the South. Nearly 250 churches had been established in Tennessee, making the group second only to the Methodists and Baptists. The concentration was in the central and western divisions of the state, with one county (Rutherford) having nineteen.⁶

Four reasons may be given for the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. First, Presbyterian ministers were unable to accommodate the inflexible tenets of Calvinism to the self-reliant frontier mind. As the Methodists, "New Lights," Stoneites and Campbellites preached an Arminian who-so-ever-will doctrine, the Presbyterian insistence upon a limited atonement could not adequately compete. Participation in the Great Revival is a second cause. As the physical demonstrations—contortions of the body, shakings, and barkings—became more popular forms of emotional release, the educated Presbyterian ministers recoiled in horror and denounced the manifestations of religious fervor as undignified and unchristian. Those who organized the Cumberland Presbyterians were of the revival party. The educational requirements were a third disrupting feature. Because of the pressing need for ministers, the Transylvania Presbytery licensed

several men who were learned in the Scripture but who did not have a classical education. Vehement objection resulted, although the General Assembly had stated that a liberal education was not "absolutely essential to a man's usefulness in the ministry . . . but that reason and experience both demonstrate its high importance and utility." A fourth cause, which Cumberland Presbyterian adherents have cited more than any other, was the belief that "fatality"—which they utterly rejected—was taught in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith through the doctrine of predestination. The concept was to be the main item of contention between the two groups thereafter, and in 1906 it prevented a complete reunion of them. The Cumberlands adopted a "medium theology" which represented to them a half-way point between Calvinism and Arminianism. They illustrated the "middle ground" by asserting that while every person is free to choose the way of life that pleases him, once one has been "truly regenerated" and believes, his salvation is assured.⁷ As will be observed later, the Cumberland Presbyterians were one of the major sects which did not divide over the slavery issue.

2. *Disciples of Christ*—While they were having trouble in the Cumberland area in sustaining a strict interpretation of Calvinism, Presbyterians experienced similar difficulties in northern Kentucky. "New Lightism," which actually was a protest against the rigidity of human creeds and a claim of divine revelation apart from the Scripture, made its first appearance within both the Presbyterian and Baptist churches in the early 1700's. It received added impetus after the Great Awakening of 1734, and by 1800 had influenced Stone and others. The second tear in the Presbyterian fabric centers around Stone and Alexander Campbell, both of whom were ordained Presbyterian ministers. Although in the beginning their work was not primarily in Tennessee, the Stoneite-Campbellite movement soon wrought havoc among Tennessee Baptist and Presbyterian congregations, and by the 1830's emerged as a strong American religious body variously known as Christians, Disciples of Christ, or Churches of Christ. The group was a culmination of the "primitive gospel movement," and represented a synthesizing of protests against "Calvinistic Baptists" in the East, "Authoritarian Methodists" in the South, and "Calvinistic Presbyterians" in the Kentucky-Tennessee area.⁸

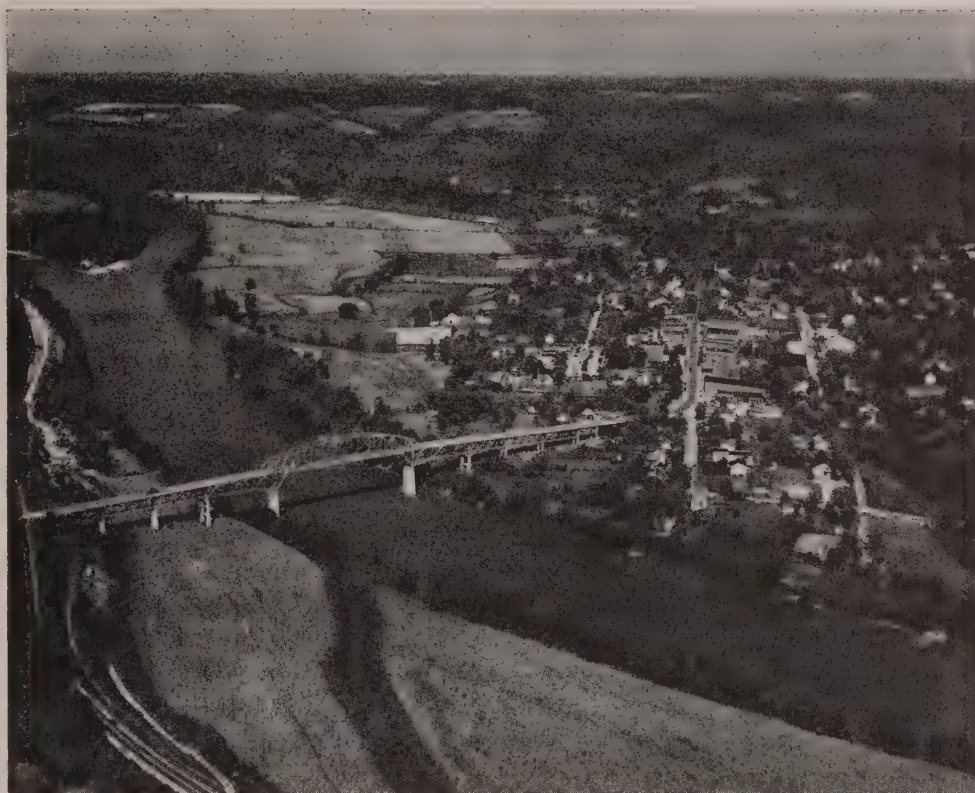
Stone, an ordained Presbyterian minister, repudiated the rigidity of Calvinism. Before 1800 he had preached extensively in East Tennessee and had wandered into Kentucky, where soon he associated himself with the Cane Ridge revival. By 1803 the Synod of Kentucky had arraigned Stone and four other "revival men" for preaching Arminian, instead of Calvinistic, doctrine. Discussions similar to those which involved the Cumberland group then ensued, with the result that the Synod suspended the five and declared their pulpits vacant. The five then organized an independent (Springfield) presbytery in 1803, but dissolved it in the following year, with the "hope" that it might "sink into union with the Body of Christ at large"; that "our name of distinction, with its 'Reverend' title be forgotten; that the church of Christ resume her native right of internal government . . ."; and "that

the people take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven . . .” With these points Stone expressed some of the basic tenets of his faith. Of the five ministers, two returned to the Presbyterian fold and two joined the Shakers, but Stone continued to persevere alone. At this stage he gave little emphasis to the method of baptism, apparently believing that sprinkling was sufficient. He placed no significance upon the restoration of the practices of the primitive church but did emphasize that no “Reverend title” should be used, that ministers should not demand or receive contracts or stated salaries, that there should be no educational requirements for ministers, and that followers be designated simply as “Christians.”⁹

Stone remained in the Kentucky-Ohio area until 1810 and then came to Tennessee. There he wrote and disseminated pamphlets publicizing the “Christian” church. His emphasis upon no educational requirements for ministers (he preferred preaching laymen, or “farmer-preachers”) made possible a widespread ministry. His was a “frontier faith versus orthodoxy,” and his insistence upon “no human creed—just the Bible” brought many frontiersmen into the fold. By 1827 nearly 13,000 people had become members of the “Christian Connexion in the West.” Almost 2,000 of them were in Tennessee, which ranked just behind Ohio and Kentucky in membership.¹⁰

By this time an abler and more potent figure, whose beliefs were almost identical to those of Stone, had appeared on the scene. This was Alexander Campbell. Campbell came from a long line of dissenters. His great-grandfather had been a staunch Roman Catholic, but his grandfather had rejected Romanism and had united with the Episcopal church. His father, Thomas, had become an ordained minister in the Seceder Presbyterian Church, which was formed from a schism in the Church of Scotland in 1733. The denominational bitterness on the British Isles aroused within Thomas’s mind a great antipathy toward sectarianism and all of its manifestations. He then departed for America, arriving in Philadelphia in 1807, and was appointed to preach in the Allegheny Valley. There he invited other Presbyterians, not of the Seceder sect, to participate in communion services, and he was severely censured for it by his Presbytery. A continuation of strife caused him to declare his independence of all organized religious bodies and all human creeds. He advised his followers (using words later to become very popular among them), “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” Young Alexander, in the meantime, had established a brilliant scholastic record at the University of Glasgow, and had taught private classes in Latin. Like his father, he was a dissenter at heart and had been impressed by the teachings of a Scottish group which espoused a simple, noncreedal Christianity.¹¹

Alexander Campbell joined his father in Pennsylvania in 1809, and together they published a basic historical document in the development of the Disciples of Christ: *The Declaration and Address*. In this widely circulated statement they deprecated human creeds, urged unity among all Christians, and emphasized exact conformity to the letter of the law as laid down in the New Testament. They



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Carthage

formed a separate association but continued to consider themselves as Presbyterians; they wanted to avoid becoming just another sect opposed to sectarianism. As late as January 1, 1812, Alexander was ordained by the Presbyterian process of laying on of hands.¹²

At this point method of baptism appeared negligible. Later in that year (June 12, 1812), however, both father and son concluded from a study of the Scripture that sprinkling should be abandoned and that immersion was the only acceptable and scriptural mode of baptism. They therefore sought out a Baptist preacher, who performed the rites. It was at this point that they, in agreement with Baptists, decided against infant baptism.¹³

The stand on baptismal rites brought the Campbells into friendly relations with the Baptists, while it served to erect a barrier between them and other groups. In 1813 they merged their small body of followers into "the bosom of the Regular Baptist Churches." Although Alexander Campbell continued his association with the Baptists until 1830, he was in frequent disagreement with them. His repudia-

tion of the Old Testament and his insistence that Christians were under "the new covenant of grace" displeased Calvinistic Baptists. Equally unsatisfactory was his emphasis upon a celebration of the Lord's Supper each Sunday instead of the Baptist practice of observing it less often. In the early 1820's he incurred still more displeasure by his insistence upon baptismal regeneration rather than an acceptance of the orthodox Baptist view that baptism was only an outward manifestation of an inward spiritual regeneration. The latter point he strongly emphasized in 1823 in a seven-day debate with the Reverend W. L. McCalla, a Presbyterian minister. His first decade as a Baptist was one of reformation and iconoclasm, in which he strongly condemned the clergy ("hireling priests"), seminaries ("priest factories"), missionary societies, the pew rent system, Bible societies, and church associations in general.¹⁴

Campbell began to have serious trouble with Baptist leaders in the early 1820's. By this time it was evident that he was not content simply to remain a minister in the Baptist church. His influence grew, and soon many Baptist congregations became Campbellite. In Nashville, for example, in 1820 Baptists established one of the finest churches in the state—what is now Vine Street Christian Church. Several years later the congregation called as pastor Philip S. Fall, a Baptist admirer of Campbell. In 1827 Campbell visited the congregation, and within a year after the visit Fall had transformed the group from a regular Baptist to a Campbell church. Only five members out of 131 objected to Campbellism, and by 1833 Fall had tripled the membership. Many other Baptist and Stoneite churches in Tennessee soon came under Campbell's influence. A congregation of 350 from the Buffalo Ridge Baptist Church was swept into the fold in 1828. The official board of the nearby Sinking Creek Church, in desperation, hastily voted to bar its pulpit to all "sysmatics [*sic*] of unsound creed."¹⁵

In 1824 Campbell met two men who were to have considerable influence upon his movement. They were "Raccoon" John Smith,* of East Tennessee, and Stone. Smith, a Baptist preacher who had read extensively in Campbell's *Christian Baptist*, became an ardent follower of his master's doctrines. He especially was impressed with the idea of uniting all Christians upon scriptural grounds and therefore was not at all squeamish about "proselyting."^{**} Although he aroused the wrath of the Baptists, he was successful in adding members to his folds. Stone immediately recognized Campbell as a man of superior intellect and qualities. Soon they opened negotiations for union. Campbell had been known as a "reforming Baptist," and his followers had been termed "Reformers" and "Disciples." Stone had preferred the name "Christian," but Campbell desired something more distinctive.¹⁶

Preliminary negotiations for union between the Campbell and Stone groups

* The name had been given him early in life to distinguish him, so it was said, from "the other John Smiths." Oliver Taylor, *Historic Sullivan* (Bristol, 1909), 166.

** Smith once boasted that he had "baptized six hundred sinners, and capsized fifteen hundred Baptists." Davis, *How Disciples Grew*, 212.

took place in a four-day conference in December, 1831, when Smith (now known by the longer title of "Raccoon John of Tennessee"), representing Campbell, met with Stone. A formal union, based not "upon ecclesiastical pronouncement, but rather . . . on love, fellowship and common ideals," took place at Lexington, Kentucky, early in 1832. Only a few of the Stoneite churches refused to join. Their objection was that Campbell placed too much emphasis upon water baptism; that one could be immersed in water and "emerge a child of God" was unacceptable to them.¹⁷ Smith continued to plead with them, however, urging that everyone should "be no longer Campbellites, or Stoneites, or New Lights, or Old Lights, or any other kind of lights," but should "come to the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the only Book in the world that can give us all the light we need."¹⁸

By 1832 the influence of Campbell and Stone had been felt in every part of Tennessee. The *Bible Advocate* was published at Paris, beginning in 1842, and the *Christian Review* was begun in Nashville soon thereafter. John Hooten, "entirely illiterate, but mighty in the Scriptures," was not typical of the early ministers. More representative were P. S. Fall, Tolbert Fanning, and Campbell himself, who called upon the people throughout the South and new West to repent and "obey the gospel." Campbell's visits to Nashville (in 1827, 1830, 1835, 1841, 1855, and 1858) greatly strengthened the cause in Tennessee. During the first half of the nineteenth century few if any religious groups could boast of so able a leader. President James Madison described Campbell in 1828 as "the ablest and most original and most powerful expounder of the Scriptures" he had ever heard, and Stone late in life reflected that he had fewer faults "than . . . any man I know on earth."¹⁹

By 1860 the Disciples, Christians, or Churches of Christ, as they were variously known, had in Tennessee 106 churches with a membership of approximately 12,285 and ranked fifth in size among other religious bodies in the state. The churches were concentrated mainly in Middle and West Tennessee, with only a sprinkling in East Tennessee.²⁰

3. *Presbyterians—Old School and New School*—Despite the divisions and loss of membership caused by the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Christians, the Presbyterians in Tennessee continued to show a small increase in members. In 1814, when Gideon Blackburn organized the First Church in Nashville, Presbyterians had seventy-nine congregations in the state. In the early 1820's, after the western division was opened for settlement, Presbyterians moved westward. This strengthened the overall state membership but weakened it somewhat in Middle Tennessee. Considerable growth was experienced during the early 1830's, but soon dissension erupted again within Presbyterian ranks.²¹

A "Plan of Union" had been worked out between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in 1801, which permitted close cooperation and use of facilities between the two groups. Conservative Presbyterians objected from the beginning, and by the 1830's two parties, the New School liberals and the Old School con-

servatives, had formed. The latter seriously objected to the union because they believed that Congregationalists, who had not accepted the doctrine or form of government of the Presbyterians, constituted a menace rather than a benefit to the cause of their group. Philip Lindsley, Nashville preacher and teacher, had never seen a period in his church's history "so critical and perilous." Many of the New School group also sought the adoption of a more liberal interpretation of Calvinism; and the slavery question, although kept in the background, served as a point of agitation between the groups. Finally, in 1838, with the Old School party safely in the majority, the General Assembly voted to excise four synods and abrogate the Plan of Union. The ousted brethren, in the area where the Plan of Union had operated, protested vigorously, but without success.²²

The division resulted in the establishment of two denominations. Presbyterians in Tennessee were not affected immediately by the union, but many deplored the action. Members of the Presbytery of West Tennessee described it as both "unconstitutional and unwise," but remained faithful to the Old School, as did most of the members of Middle Tennessee. Many congregations in the eastern division termed the act of excision "a mournful exhibition of . . . misguided zeal, alarming to every friend of civil, as well as religious liberty," and joined the New School group.²³

The Old School Presbyterians were safely in control of the South for the next two decades. While Methodists and Baptists separated along sectional lines in 1844-1845 (which will be discussed later), Presbyterians avoided another rupture. It was not until 1861 that they divided along sectional lines.

By 1860 nearly 200 Presbyterian churches had been established in Tennessee. The group ranked fourth in size—behind the Methodists, Baptists, and Cumberland Presbyterians. Thus, by the time of the war Presbyterians had fallen far behind the dominant position which they had held earlier on the frontier. Their insistence upon rigid doctrinal and educational standards—a mistake of judging the frontier "by the standards of Philadelphia"—had been responsible primarily for their failure to keep pace.²⁴

Baptists—Frontier Baptist preachers were in East Tennessee by 1780 and within less than two decades they had gained a foothold in Middle Tennessee where they established the Mero Association. Their insistence that immersion was the only true scriptural form of baptism attracted large crowds. In the summer of 1838, for example, Reuben Ross (who had stirred up trouble in Montgomery and Stewart counties thirty years earlier) baptized sixty-six converts in a Middle Tennessee creek. Although most Baptists were Calvinistic and opposed an over-exhibition of emotional fervor such as took place in the Kentucky revivals, the mode of baptism and the loose congregational form of government appealed to the people and helped win many converts.²⁵

The Baptists did not profit by the Great Revival of 1800 as much as did the

Methodists and Cumberland Presbyterians, but their membership did increase considerably after 1800. Twelve years later Tennessee Baptists boasted of 11,325 members. By that date the Holston Association had been established on the Holston River, the Tennessee Association had been founded in Knoxville, and the Cumberland and Concord associations thrived in Middle Tennessee. The comet of 1811 and the series of earthquakes felt in the same year brought many converts into the folds of all religious groups. In the autumn of 1811 after Reuben Ross had preached a funeral sermon in Stewart County and the casket was being lowered into the grave, a bright light appeared in the sky which was the first appearance of the comet. Those who saw it became convinced that they had seen a "harbinger of impending calamity." In January and February of the next year severe earthquakes toppled chimneys and cracked walls in Nashville; in West Tennessee channels of rivers were diverted and Reelfoot Lake was formed. "Earthquake Christians," feeling that the end was near, flocked to the frontier churches, professed belief, and began to reform their lives. Soon after Jackson's purchase of West Tennessee (1818), Baptists moved there and in 1822 they established the Western District Association. Forked Deer Association, with fifteen churches and 400 members, was organized three years later. Within a few years thousands of Baptists were in Tennessee. In 1833 five thousand held a camp meeting revival in Wilson County, and a few years later the entire Concord Association assembled in Rutherford County.²⁶

Like the Presbyterians, the Tennessee Baptists suffered from controversies and schisms within the church. The rise of the Campbell and Stone groups, although led by ministers who first were Presbyterians, wrought far greater havoc among Baptist churches than among any other. The Concord Association (mainly Davidson, Sumner, Wilson, and Rutherford counties) alone was reduced by the Disciple movement from forty-nine churches and 3,399 members to eleven churches and 805 members. When in 1835 Robert B. C. Howell came from Virginia to pastor the Nashville Baptist Church, he found a congregation weakened and discouraged by the Campbell influence. He observed dissension among Baptists and found at least ten distinct sects who refused to take communion even with one another. The Primitive (Hardshell, Foot-Washing, or Anti-Mission, as they were called also) group disagreed with the regular Baptists on the question of missionary work. While the majority of Baptists insisted that missionary activity was necessary both to fulfill divine law and to expand the church, Primitive Baptists believed that it was unscriptural and even evil. The Two-Seed Baptists, which had been founded in 1826 by Daniel Parker, agreed with the Primitive group.* Even though this discordant force was declining in 1835, Howell observed in that year that the Two-Seed doctrine had "corrupted and laid waste many a pious heart."²⁷

The anti-mission controversy, which seriously threatened to disrupt all Bap-

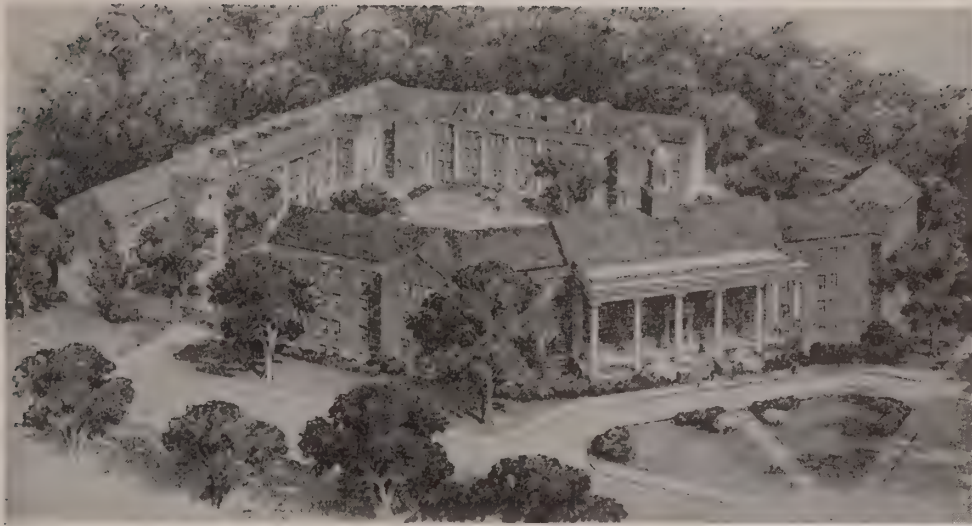
* Extreme right wing Calvinists, the Two-Seed Baptists believed that in every person two seeds had been sown—good and evil—but that men were born with one seed dominant.

tist congregations, began in Tennessee soon after the War of 1812, and raged for three decades. The personification of the anti-mission movement in the Tennessee-Kentucky area was Daniel Parker, who in 1816 threatened to "break" the Concord Association unless all mission effort was stopped and all ties with mission boards were severed. So persuasive was he that members of the association complied with his demands for several years. As early as 1806 Parker had helped organize a Baptist church in Dickson County and was ordained as a minister there. He and his brother, John, vigorously opposed formal education, benevolent societies, foreign and home missions, and schools of theology.²⁸

When Parker moved to Illinois early in the 1820's, anti-missionism (or "anti-effortism," as it was often called by rural Baptists) subsided, but it was revived by Alexander Campbell, who was affiliated with the Baptists for nearly two decades. Using Tennessee as a base, the anti-missionary forces spread to the surrounding states. Parker went from Tennessee into the Northwest and eventually into Texas. Although the pro-mission group eventually won control, it was not without a hard and disastrous struggle. Many churches had gone on record permanently as opposing missions, as did the session of Dumphlin Creek Church in East Tennessee, which proclaimed itself as forever "against home and furrin [*sic*] missions and all other societies of the day."²⁹

While other discordant forces worked against Baptist unity during the period, two others—the strife leading to the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the development of "Old Landmarkism"—should be discussed. By 1842, at which time Baptists had 700 churches and 35,000 members in Tennessee, the slavery question had become an issue which involved ministers in both the North and the South. As early as 1835, Robert T. Daniel preached throughout Tennessee and some of the other Southern states in favor of a Southern convention which would meet the peculiar needs of the South and Southwest. When in 1844 the Foreign Mission Board refused to recommend a Georgia slaveholder for appointment as missionary to the Cherokee Indians, Southern Baptists met in Augusta (1845) and formed the Southern Baptist Convention. Most of the Tennessee churches joined the Southern Convention, and in 1849 the First Baptist Church of Nashville was the meeting place for the annual convention.³⁰

"Old Landmarkism," the brainchild of James R. Graves, became another disruptive force in the Baptist Church in the fifteen years before the war. Graves went to Nashville from Ohio in 1845 and soon was editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*. He became a close friend of Robert B. C. Howell, the recognized leader of the Tennessee Baptists, but by 1850 they had disagreed over doctrinal matters. From his Nashville pulpit and in his publication, Graves called upon all Baptists to return to "the old landmarks" of New Testament Christianity. Modern emphasis upon human creeds had corrupted mankind, and Graves sought a "return" to the primitive church. He also advanced the claim that Baptists antedated the Protestant Reformation and traced their history to the apostles. He believed in a "Baptist apos-



(Courtesy of the Institute)

Cookeville—New Residence Halls for Women, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (Architect's sketch)



(Courtesy of the Institute)

Cookeville—New Library, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute

tolie succession" which alone held the keys to the kingdom. His views in many ways coincided with those of Alexander Campbell, but he made it clear from the beginning that he did not want to break away from the Baptist Church. He opposed missionary activity, violently condemned the prevalent practice among Baptist preachers of cooperating with ministers of other faiths, opposed association with Pedobaptists (those who practiced infant baptism), refused to accept baptism by any minister other than a Baptist, and believed that the Lord's Supper should be taken only by local congregations and not shared with members of other Baptist churches.³¹

A small but vociferous Landmark faction prevailed in Nashville, but largely though the influence of Howell it was prevented from getting control of the First Church in that city. Controversy raged in the General Association of Tennessee for two years (1857-1858). By 1859 Graves and his followers had been expelled from the First Church, but they promptly established another, which they called Spring Street Baptist Church. Graves remained in Nashville until after the Civil War, at which time he moved to Memphis. There he continued his struggle for a return to the original "landmarks."³²

Despite the various disruptive factors, Tennessee Baptists ranked second only to the Methodists during the ante bellum period. In 1860 they had nearly 700 churches well distributed throughout the state. A least one church was located in every county. Twenty-one congregations had been established in Sevier County, nineteen in Wilson County, and eighteen in Carroll County.³³

Baptists, probably more than members of any other denomination, watched carefully after the conduct of their fellow church members. Each congregation drafted a document called "Rules of Decorum," and members were supposed to live in accordance with them and with the Bible. Those whose morals were lax were called before the church session and often dismissed from the congregation. One young lady of the Concord Association who confessed before her fellow church members that she was "guilty of a wrong in joining the young people on last newyears [*sic*] evening in their plays and pastimes," was only reprimanded before the congregation. Jeremiah Bugg, who told "a ly" [*sic*], and Joshua James and William Terman, who were intoxicated, received the full penalty of excommunication. In the Turnbull Creek Church a Sister Barfoot was turned out of the church for "taking up with a married man," and a Sister Hutchenson was excommunicated for "not being obedient to her husband, as directed by Saint Peter." Even the pastor, Daniel Parker, was brought before the session for selling a sick cow and refusing to redeem her. Parker pleaded that he did not know the health of the cow at the time of the transaction, and the session excused him with a reprimand only. In 1829 David Crockett's ex-fianceé, Margaret Elder,* was excluded from the Dumplin Creek Church for "absenting herself from us & joining the

* Crockett and Margaret had received a marriage license in 1806 but were never married. Taylor, *Early Baptists*, 227-28.

Methodist Society." Earlier a Dumplin Creek woman had sought membership only to be turned down because "she had two husbands now a Live [*sic*]. In July, 1829, the Dumplin session appointed Deacon Thomas Jones to reprimand Isaac Neel for "drinking too much Spirrits" [*sic*]. On August 8, however, Jones admitted that his reprimand had little effect upon Neel, and therefore Neel was excommunicated. By June, 1830, Neel may have "converted" the deacon, for Jones confessed that he (Jones) had been "drinking too much Sperrits" [*sic*]. Jones was a man of prominence and the session members readily forgave him, and refused to remove him from the deaconship. This action apparently was enough to deter Jones for more than a year, for it was not until January, 1832, that he again was arraigned and this time he confessed that he was "guilty of drinking too much Sperits" [*sic*]. His membership was suspended temporarily, but two months later the session restored him, resolving that his excommunication should be permanent "should he not reform." Deacon Jones loved intoxicants more than he did the Baptist Church, however, and on July 14, after the session received "due proof that Brother Thomas Jones had been drinking too much spirits," he was turned out of the church. The close fellowship and watchful care found in the Baptist churches were no doubt one reason for their growth, and soon after the war they outstripped the Methodists in their efforts to gather members into the folds.³⁴

Methodists—No religious body exerted more leadership in Tennessee church affairs during the ante bellum period than did the Methodists. As has been observed in an earlier chapter, Bishop Francis Asbury, Benjamin Ogden, Jeremiah Lambert and others had labored over the circuits before 1800, but it was not until the Great Revival of that year that the church began to show decided growth. The revival, the rapid advance of population across the mountains, and the great earthquake and comet all added members. In 1812 the Tennessee Conference was formed, consisting of the Holston, Nashville, Cumberland, Wabash, Illinois, Louisiana, and Mississippi districts. Membership in Tennessee at the time was estimated at nearly 15,500 whites and 1,500 Negroes. The Conference subsequently was divided several times, so that by 1828 it included only that part of Tennessee west of the Cumberland Mountains and a part of Alabama. The Holston Conference, formed in 1824, included all of Tennessee east of the mountains, and parts of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. West Tennessee was opened for settlement shortly after the Jackson Purchase of 1818, and two years later missionaries from the Tennessee Conference worked among the "squatters." Several districts were organized, and by 1823 sixteen circuit riders tended a flock of nearly 2,500 Methodists. The rapid growth of West Tennessee brought the creation of the Memphis District in 1833, and in 1840 the Memphis Conference was organized. Tennessee was the only state to be embraced within the bounds of three conferences—Memphis, Tennessee, and Holston.³⁵

Tennessee Methodists were fortunate in that divisive forces did not impede

their growth as in the Presbyterian and Baptist churches. Although Methodist Protestants had withdrawn in 1830 after a dispute over lay participation in church government and the powers of bishops, zealots had formed the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in 1843 over slavery, and the Free Methodists had coalesced a few years later over a holiness argument, none of these divisions affected the church in Tennessee. It was only in the controversy of 1844-1845, when two distinct branches of Methodism, North and South, were formed, that Tennessee Methodists participated actively.³⁶

The North-South division had been in the making for some time, and centered around slavery. The Negro question had been discussed in the Conferences of 1796, 1800, 1808, 1816, and 1824—always in a friendly manner—after which it subsided for awhile as a topic for debate. The question was revived in 1836, however, and became a subject of major importance for the next decade. Although in the early years of Methodism slaveholding was deprecated, by 1844 approximately 25,000 church members held over 200,000 slaves, and 1,200 preachers held 11,000 slaves. The abolition controversy had stirred ministers and laymen of all faiths to action by the mid-1830's, and at the General Conference of 1844 in New York a crisis was reached in American Methodism. Northern Methodists admitted that they were becoming increasingly embarrassed over the subject, and that each year some of their ministers deserted to the abolitionist Wesleyan Connection. The controversy resolved itself to an argument over whether Bishop James Osgood Andrew, a Georgia minister who recently had acquired title to slaves through a second marriage, should be compelled to resign because of his connection with "this great evil"—slavery. The Tennessee conferences had sent able delegations to the New York meeting, and Dr. Alexander L. P. Green, John B. McFerrin, and Robert Paine played significant roles in the debate. Green, a member of the Committee on Slavery,* summarized the sentiment of the Southern delegates when he told the group:

If Bishop Andrew be deposed and . . . the preachers in the South . . . [submit] to such an unjust and extrajudicial proceeding, it would disable the preachers [of the South] in such a manner that we could not serve our people It is no small matter with the South that none of our southern preachers can be elected a bishop³⁷

Despite strong advice to postpone the Andrew case until the next Conference, Northern ministers insisted upon a vote. Andrew was deposed, after which McFerrin immediately suggested that the Conference "devise . . . a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the church." Before leaving New York Southerners met separately, signed a "Declaration of the Southern Delegates," and resolved that "the continued jurisdiction of the General Conference over the

* Peter Cartwright, who had moved to Illinois, was also a member of the committee.

ministry in the slaveholding states would be inconsistent with success." They also agreed to meet in Louisville in 1845 to form a Southern conference.³⁸

Tennessee was well represented in the Louisville meeting. The Holston group sent five delegates, the Tennessee Conference sent ten, and the Memphis Conference sent seven delegates. A committee, which included Robert Paine of the Tennessee Conference, reported that out of a membership of 50,000, ninety-five per cent of the ministry and membership favored a division of jurisdiction. Thus, at Louisville, in 1845, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was formed. Even leaders of the Holston Conference in East Tennessee approved, voting "most heartily to commend" the actions of its bishops and delegates, especially "their steady adherence to principle and best interest of the slave population." Conferences in every slaveholding state joined, except in the border states of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, where "feverish backstage compromises" saved them for the North.³⁹

By 1860 the Southern Methodists exceeded other groups in membership in Tennessee. They claimed nearly 1,000 churches, which were well scattered from East to West Tennessee. At least one was located in every county, and Madison had 33, Giles and Maury 26 each, and Davidson 20. Several factors accounted for the dominance of Methodism in ante bellum Tennessee and on the frontier in general. The church did not have to contend with divisions as did the Presbyterians and Baptists. The Wesleyan division did not materially affect Tennessee Methodists, and the formation of the Southern church in 1845 was along sectional lines. Secondly, the Arminian doctrine of free grace, free will, and individual responsibility fitted well into the rising democratic spirit of the new West. Peter Cartwright, for example, had said of Andrew Jackson, within the General's hearing, that if the Old Hero did not "get his soul converted" God would "damn him as quick as he would a Guinea Negro." Third, the courageous nature of the circuit-riding preacher enabled the gospel to be preached over a wide area. Bishop Asbury, for example, stayed in "filthy houses and filthy beds," and once wrote that he had "taken the itch," but still he crossed the Appalachians sixty-two times and preached over 15,000 sermons. Fourth, little emphasis was placed upon a college-trained ministry. The sermon of the Methodist itinerant was simple, but forceful, direct, and unfettered by manuscript. Where "manuscript readers" (as the college men usually were called) appeared they were unable to arouse their Methodist listeners. Peter Cartwright, at the sight of an educated minister, turned "away sick and faint," and claimed that "they have proved a perfect failure" among "enlightened Presbyterians and Congregationalists." While Cartwright no doubt was an exception, it remains true that most of the frontier Methodist ministers were not "hampered" by theological education. A final reason for Methodist success was a continuation of the revival and camp meeting. Twenty years after the Great Revival of 1800, for example, Methodists held a five-day camp meeting in Wilson County, where hundreds professed Christianity. In the same year

T. L. Douglas and Sterling Brown reaped 350 conversions in a Rutherford County meeting of a similar nature.⁴⁰

While Methodists had few controversies within their own folds, they warred constantly with other religious groups, particularly the closely competing Baptists. To many observers it seemed "a fight to the finish" often devoid "of religion." William G. Brownlow, for example, alleged that "tall," "knockkneed," and "raw-boned" Baptist preachers were so vulgar as even to change clothes in the presence of a congregation after performing baptismal rites. In the rural areas the Baptists were more than a match for the Methodists, but in the cities Methodists (aided by the Campbell movement) emerged triumphant. Their basic differences were about Calvinism, method of baptism, and closed communion. Methodist doctrine was the Arminianism of John Wesley, while Baptists carried the banner of Calvinism. Methodists insisted upon sprinkling as a form of baptism and also baptized infants, but Baptists taught that immersion was the only scriptural form and opposed infant baptism. Methodists considered the Lord's Supper a "love feast" in which any regenerated soul might participate, while Baptists considered communion to be one of the rites which set them apart from the world, and that only an immersed person could take it. Many controversies ensued. Isaac Conger, a circuit rider preaching near Fayetteville in 1813, had considerable trouble with "the old Baptists." "Parson" Brownlow was the most notorious proponent of Methodism. He debated indiscriminately with protagonists of other faiths and vented his unusual power of vituperation especially on Frederick A. Ross (Presbyterian) and J. R. Graves (Baptist), which controversies were followed with considerable interest by contemporaries. To Brownlow, immersion was not only impractical, vulgar, foolish, and physically dangerous, but was also contrary to the Scripture. Peter Cartwright, another strong proponent of Methodism, upon being admonished by his bishop to be "polite as possible" to Presbyterians, replied, "Well sir, you've sent me to preach . . . and I tell you that I will give them [*sic*] Presbyterians something . . . which they will remember." The Reverend John McFerrin was especially harassed during the year of the North-South division. At the same time he also had a controversy with the editor of the *Cumberland Presbyterian*, an "animated discussion" with the editor of the *Christian Record*, and wrote that he sustained "frequent attacks from the Baptists during the summer." Bishop Asbury much preferred Presbyterians to Baptists, but he did not always get along harmoniously even with the Presbyterians.⁴¹

The Methodists escaped major controversy with the brilliant and forceful Alexander Campbell, although the anti-denomination champion debated Presbyterians, Baptists, Catholics, and agnostics. His debate with the Reverend N. L. Rice, a learned Presbyterian minister, lasted seven days and drew thousands of listeners, including Henry Clay. As Campbell continued to make inroads upon Baptist membership, preachers of that faith frequently attacked him. J. J. Bur-

nett bitterly asserted that both Stone and Campbell denied the deity of Christ, another termed them "religious salamanders, . . . [who] live only in the fire of strife and contention," and still another wrote of the "blasting pestilence of Campbellism." Obadiah Jennings, Presbyterian minister who debated with Campbell in Nashville in 1832, thought his opponent "more erroneous than the Bishop of Rome," and that some Nashvillians gave him credit for a degree of learning "to which he was by no means entitled." According to Jennings, the "system" of Campbell was "calculated to exclude all true spirituality from the religion of the Bible," and was "in fact, a system of infidelity . . . disguised . . ."⁴²

Despite the animosity, groups in many communities cooperated well. Barton Stone wrote early in the 1800's that "Methodist and Baptist preachers aided" him in revivals, and that "the salvation of sinners seemed to be the great object of all." A Baptist report in 1839 indicated that the "Methodist and Cumberland Presbyterian brethren" cooperated with the Baptists "heartily" in many locales. In Jonesboro, where Baptists for a time had no church of their own, Presbyterians and Methodists shared their buildings with the Baptists, and in Rutherford County a young man who entered the Cumberland Presbyterian ministry was converted in a Methodist camp meeting.⁴³

Episcopalians, Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews—Episcopalians in Tennessee were unorganized during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Their church had lost considerable membership after the Revolutionary War, and Tennessee frontiersmen looked askance at the church when they learned of its former connection with the Church of England and its formal liturgy and similarity to Catholic polity. St. Paul's Church, in Franklin, organized in 1827 by the Reverend James Hervey Otey, was probably the first to be formed in the state. Much of ante bellum Episcopal history centers around Otey. He came to Williamson County in 1825 to establish a school, but soon sought also to organize a congregation of Episcopalians. Shortly after St. Paul's was formed Otey was called to Nashville, where he organized a congregation. In 1829 the Right Reverend John S. Ravenscroft, Bishop of North Carolina, visited the Nashville congregation and stirred "up the minds of the people by his bold and eloquent sermons." Construction work on Christ Church began soon thereafter, and services were held in the new building in 1831. By that time St. John's had been built in Knoxville and St. Peter's in Columbia. Otey became the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Tennessee in 1833, at which time the communicants numbered 117. Although he threatened in 1853 to resign "unless the diocese were more punctual in the payment" of his salary, Otey continued to work among Middle Tennessee Episcopalians and probably deserved more credit than anyone else for the success of the church in Tennessee.⁴⁴

By the time of the Civil War twenty-seven Episcopal clergymen and 1,500 communicants were in the state. Episcopalians concentrated in the larger towns



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Southwestern at Memphis

such as Nashville and Memphis; indeed, the former city had three churches. Among the clergymen of note other than Otey were Leonidas Polk (whose role in the establishment of the University of the South is discussed in another chapter), Charles Tomes, who married Otey's daughter and became pastor of the Nashville congregation in 1848, and Thomas Wright of Memphis.⁴⁵

Few Catholics came into the state before the War of 1812. In 1815 one member wrote to the Pope to complain of the plight of Catholic families in Tennessee. Little was done, however, until the early 1820's, when Irish mechanics moved to Nashville to construct the city's first bridge across the Cumberland River. These

people threatened to leave when they learned that no priest lived in Nashville, and plans were made immediately to secure ministerial services and to build a cathedral. In 1821 the Right Reverend Bishop David and Father Robert Abell offered the first mass in Nashville. Some years later the Right Reverend Richard Pius Miles became the first resident bishop of Tennessee. He was a man of ability and experience, and established parishes, built churches, and founded seminaries. One of the churches was organized in north Nashville in 1853 to serve German families. John Anthony Vogel was ordained in 1858 by Miles, and was placed in charge of the church. Miles lived until 1860, and was succeeded by Bishop James Whelan.⁴⁶

Not until some years later did Catholicism become established in Memphis. Father John R. Clary held services in the city at mid-century and shortly before the Civil War moved his congregation into the new St. Peter's Church. As in Nashville, railroad building aided in establishing a Catholic population in Memphis. In 1854 a large influx of Irishmen arrived from St. Louis for railroad work. By 1860 more than one-fifth of the 18,000 people in Memphis were Irish, most of whom were ardent Catholics.⁴⁷

Catholics were hindered by nativistic sentiment aroused by the Know Nothing party. "Parson" Brownlow usually was in the forefront of the attack. In 1854, when a speaker from the American and Foreign Christian Union lectured in Presbyterian and Methodist churches of Nashville on "Romanism, or The Man of Sin," Brownlow characterized his anti-Catholic outbursts as "good work, and we say *Amen* to every blow they [*sic*] strike." The editor of the Nashville *Union and American*, however, termed it "persecution" and "a disgrace to the intelligence of the age."⁴⁸

The German Lutherans, relatively few in number, centered largely in Sullivan County in East Tennessee, and some settled in nearby Greene and Cocke counties. Shortly after 1800 the Reverend William Jenkins organized the Shofner Church near Shelbyville in Middle Tennessee. Paul Henkel, a remarkably versatile author and preacher, was an early missionary in the state, and in 1820 two of his sons organized the Tennessee Synod as an independent body. Reminiscent of other frontier schisms, leaders sought fundamentals and believed that their congregation was based upon "the Holy Bible . . . and the Augsburg Confession of Faith as a pure emanation from the Bible." It was not until 1859 that a church was organized in Nashville, and the Reverend Herman Eggers, a Pennsylvanian, became the first pastor. In 1860 the Holston Synod was formed from the Tennessee Synod and became much the stronger of the two, since most of the churches were in East Tennessee. When the Civil War began Lutherans had only eighteen churches in the state, and fourteen of them were in the eastern division. It was not until twenty years after the war ended that the Tennessee and Holston synods agreed to join with the General Synod of the South, to form the United Synod in the South.⁴⁹

People of the Judaic faith lived mainly in the cities. A congregation was organized in 1851 in Nashville. Three years later, when Rabbi Alexander Iser, a Russian-Pole, arrived, the congregation was reorganized and chartered as "Khal Kodesh Mogen David," which meant a "Holy Congregation—the Shield of David." A congregation was formed in Memphis in 1853, although by that time Jews had been in that city for at least a decade. In the following year a congregation called "Children of Israel" was formed and chartered by the legislature. Also in that year a Ladies Benevolent Society was organized. By 1860 the Memphis synagogue had a membership of approximately seventy-five, and the Nashville group had about the same number. A smaller congregation, Beth El, House of God, was organized in Knoxville during the war.⁵⁰

Religious Activity of Negroes—To the Negro, born in bondage with little hope of improving his status on earth, the Christian religion was especially appealing. The blacks enjoyed the white man's religious services, as well as church meetings of their own. Practically all slaveholders insisted that their Negroes go to church, and most congregations provided seats in the rear or balcony, and only a few told their slaves that they "must catch the Gospel as it escapes by the doors and windows." Their lowly position did not prevent them from making the most of their day of rest. West Tennessee Negroes delighted in making preparations for the services and would go singing to and from the place of worship. Not infrequently would slaves be permitted to hold separate services on Sunday afternoons. Robert B. C. Howell was one of the first ministers to insist upon such services for the blacks. According to Howell,

the . . . colored people require special training. Their minds are of a peculiar caste; their temptations, and trials are unlike those of others; they are generally dull of apprehension; they are for the most part, strongly inclined to fanaticism; as church members they are litigious, and difficult to govern. A sermon which to a cultivated white congregation, would be highly instructive and useful, is of very little worth to the colored people present . . . because the amount of thought is more than they can grasp, and the train of ideas not in a familiar direction. . . . The two classes require different forms of instruction. They can never both prosper together.⁵¹

Negroes were received into the church in the same way as were whites. From 1810 to 1816 over 150 "Black People" were baptized and received into membership of the Zion Presbyterian Church in Maury County. In 1828 a Negro woman was taken into the Turnbull Creek Baptist Church when her former master, a Virginian, advised the pastor that "she was a member in the state of Virginia and Baptised [*sic*] by a worthy Baptist." A few years later Elias Napier's "negrow [*sic*] woman Liza" was received and baptized. Bishop James H. Otey transcribed in his diary on Sunday, March 18, 1853, that he "baptised [*sic*] pri-

vately . . . a negro child named Walter," Slave members frequently ran afoul of Baptist and Presbyterian discipline. In 1816 "Minor Bibb's negro woman" was arraigned, tried, and excommunicated on three charges: "drinking two [*sic*] much," dancing, and "keeping bad hours." Probably three-fourths of all cases among Negroes involved improper sexual relations.⁵²

Although slaves were found in all religious bodies, the Methodist fire and Baptist water seemed most appealing to them. To some, the Baptist faith had such an affinity that a Memphis Negro preacher asserted that "If a Negro was not a Baptist somebody had been tampering with him." A slaveowner in 1833 described his runaway slave as a Negro who was "fond of spirits, cards and tobacco, and with-all professes to be a member of the Baptist Church." The First Baptist Church of Nashville had approximately 500 slave members in the mid-1840's—so many that a separate "Colored Mission" was formed for them. The pastor, Robert B. C. Howell, kept a guiding hand on their work, but Nelson M. Merry, a free Negro of considerable ability, became the superintendent. Negro membership in the Mission increased rapidly, and by the time of Merry's death in 1884 it had increased to 2,800. Immediately after the separation of the Methodists in 1844, plans were made in the Southern states to form separate Negro congregations. The "McKendree African Mission" was organized in 1844 with 466 members. The Williamson County Mission and the Lebanon Mission were formed soon thereafter, each having in excess of 400 members. Most of the congregations, however, kept the Negroes within the white churches until after the Civil War.⁵³

When the War began probably 90 per cent or more of the Tennessee slaves were church members. Most were affiliated with the Baptist and Methodist churches. After the War separate Negro churches were formed in most denominations of all Southern states.

By 1860 sectarianism had wrought its worst and the various religious bodies apparently had assumed a less controversial nature. Although the Disciples were to divide later into the Conservative (Church of Christ) and Progressive groups, no other serious division was to result, and Methodists were later to re-unite. By 1860 the frontier had been won by the Methodists and Baptists, and Presbyterians finished a poor third. The Methodists had more members than the Baptists, but the margin was slender, and the Baptists whittled it away soon after Appomattox.

CHAPTER XX—NOTES

1. Walter B. Posey, *The Presbyterian Church in the Old Southwest, 1788-1838* (Richmond, 1952), 14, 19, 23-31; V. M. Queener, "Gideon Blackburn, E. T. H. S. Publications, No. 6 (1934), 12-28; Winfred E. Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ: A History* (St. Louis, 1948), 102; B. W. McDonnold, *His-*

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2. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples of Christ*, 79-92.
 3. R. A. Johnstone, *An Historical Sketch of the Presbytery of Transylvania* (Louisville, 1876), 43; Posey, *Presbyterians*, 31; Campbell, *Cumberland Presbyterians*, 53.
 4. Posey, *Presbyterians*, 34; Campbell, *Cumberland Presbyterians*, 82.
 5. James Smith, *History of the Christian Church . . . including a History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church* (Nashville, 1835), 581; Posey, *Presbyterians*, 34, 36; Peter Cartwright, *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher* (Nashville, 1946), 44; McDonnold, *Cumberland Presbyterians*, 84; E. H. Gillett, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1864), I, 177-78, 190-91.
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 7. Posey, *Presbyterians*, 33; E. B. Crisman, *Origin and Doctrines of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church* (Nashville, 1856), 122-25; Campbell, *Cumberland Presbyterians*, 130-36, 272-73.
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 9. Two able biographies have appeared on Stone within recent years. They are: Charles C. Ware, *Barton Warren Stone: Pathfinder of Christian Union* (St. Louis, 1932), and West, *Stone* (see note 8 above). Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 97, 109-110, 113; Catharine Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West, 1797-1805* (Chicago, 1916), 136-41; Posey, *Presbyterians*, 32; West, *Stone*, 76-80; Ware, *Stone*, 141-43.
 10. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 115.
 11. W. T. Moore, *Comprehensive History of Disciples of Christ* (New York, 1909), 103; Harry C. Wagner, "History of Disciples of Christ in Upper East Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1950), 12-19; Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 124-44; Haywood Brinegar, "Alexander Campbell as a Debater" (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1950), 5. More than a half dozen volumes have been written on Campbell and his work. The most recent, and by far the most stimulating, is Robert Frederic West, *Alexander Campbell and Natural Religion* (New Haven, 1948).
 12. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 146-49; Torbet, *Baptists*, 287; Edward Coffman, "The Division in the Restoration Movement" (M. A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1930), 7 ff.
 13. Wagner, "Disciples in East Tennessee," 19; Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 160; Torbet, *Baptists*, 287.
 14. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 161, 171-74; Torbet, *Baptists*, 289-90; Brinegar, "Campbell as a Debater," 16.
 15. Torbet, *Baptists*, 289-90, 292; O. W. Taylor, *Early Tennessee Baptists, 1769-1832* (Nashville, 1957), 191, 194; Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 222; Posey, *The Baptist Church in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1776-1845* (Lexington, 1957), 77; Wagner, "Beginnings of Christian Church," 26, 49, 51; Rufus B. Spain, "R. B. C.

- Howell: Progressive Baptist Minister of the Old Southwest," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XIV (September, 1955), 198.
16. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 193, 217-18; Torbet, *Baptists*, 291-92; West, *Stone*, 139.
 17. Wagner, "Disciples in East Tennessee," 26; Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 287; West, *Stone*, 182. For details of the union and resulting dissention between the two groups, see West, *Stone*, Chapters 9-12, and Ware, *Stone*, Chapters 17-18.
 18. M. M. Davis, *How the Disciples Began and Grew* (Cincinnati, 1915), 119; Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 212.
 19. Garrison and DeGroot, *Disciples*, 200, 288; Davis, *Disciples*, 115; Brinegar, "Campbell as a Debater," 9.
 20. *Eighth Census*, 1860, Mortality, Property, etc., 456-68.
 21. Posey, *Presbyterians*, 113; William S. Jacobs (comp.), *Presbyterianism in Nashville* (Nashville, 1904), 13-14; Queener, "Gideon Blackburn," 23.
 22. Le Roy Halsey (ed.), *The Works of Philip Lindsley, D.D.* (3 vols., Philadelphia, 1866), II, 370; Timothy D. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (New York, 1957), 26-27; Posey, *Presbyterians*, 118-121; "The Slavery Question in the Presbyterian Church in the Old Southwest," *Journal of Southern History*, XV (August, 1949), 322-23. C. Bruce Staiger, in a recent article published in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, has thrown considerable light on the schism. He believes that the slavery question was of more importance in the division than has generally been given credit. Slavery "was undoubtedly the deciding factor," he concludes. "Abolition and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-1838," XXXVI (December, 1949), 391-414.
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 24. *Eighth Census*, 1860, pp. 466-69; West, *Stone*, 51.
 25. Posey, *Baptists*, 5, 13.
 26. *Ibid.*, 56-57, 58, 59, 61; Cartter Patten, *A Tennessee Chronicle* (Chattanooga, 1953), 7-8; Truett Cox, "Tennessee Baptist Convention," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (2 vols., Nashville, 1958), II, 1362.
 27. *Ibid.*; Rufus B. Spain, "R. B. C. Howell: Virginia Baptist Tradition Comes to the Old Southwest," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XIV (June, 1955), 109-11; Lawrence Edwards, "History of the Baptists of Tennessee with Particular Attention to the Primitive Baptists of East Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1941), 52; William W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, The Baptists, 1783-1830* (New York, 1931), 67, 69.
 28. Corlew, *Dickson County*, 48-49; Cox, "Tennessee Baptist Convention," 1361-62; Posey, *Baptists*, 68-72, 79; Spain, "Howell: Progressive Baptist Minister," 202-03; "Howell: Virginia Baptist," 113.
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 30. Posey, *Baptists*, 151, 153; Torbet, *Baptists*, 304-10; J. W. Storer, "Southern Baptist Convention," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, II, 1244-46; Spain, "Howell: Progressive Baptist Minister," 216.
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 33. *Eighth Census*, 1860, pp. 465-68.
 34. Taylor, *Tennessee Baptists*, 226-28; Records of Jefferson County, Minutes of Dump-lin Creek Baptist Church, 1797-1860 (WPA Copy in State Library), 4, 46, 47, 49; Posey, *Baptists*, 50-51; Records of Turnbull Baptist Church (in possession of Henry Deal, Burns, Tennessee, when the writer examined them in 1947); Corlew, *Dickson County*, 53.
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CHAPTER XXI

Educational Development, 1806-1860

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, according to his own testimony, examined numerous original legal documents when he wrote *The Winning of the West* and was amazed that so many Tennessee backwoodsmen could sign their names.¹ Education, as the cowboy-President learned, was by no means confined to his compeers in New York and the East. The majority of the people in ante bellum Tennessee apparently cherished learning and, although they did not develop an adequate system of public education, many acquired a working knowledge of the rudiments.

In a previous chapter we have sketched the progress of educational development to 1806. After Tennessee became a state, confusion resulted when the United States Congress claimed the right to dispose of the vacant lands within the new state's boundaries. To add to the confusion, North Carolina continued to issue warrants and to perfect titles. In 1806, however, a significant compromise was reached by the three political entities, known as the "Compact of 1806." According to this agreement, Tennessee ceded to the federal government all of her claims west of the Tennessee River and also a sizable portion of land between the Duck River and the Alabama line. This land was known as the Congressional Reservation. The United States Congress, in turn, ceded to the state government the "vacant" lands north and east of the Congressional Reservation under these conditions:

- (a) Tennessee should satisfy the claims of North Carolina out of the territory ceded;
- (b) Tennessee should appropriate 100,000 acres within the district south of the French Broad and Holston (the present Tennessee) rivers and west of the Big Pigeon River for the use of two colleges, one in East and one in West (now Middle) Tennessee;
- (c) an equal tract should be set aside for use of academies, one to be established in each county;
- (d) the college and academy lands should be sold for \$2.00 per acre, and proceeds should be used for colleges and academies, but the squatters residing in the area should receive full title to the lands they occupied by paying only one dollar per acre;
- (e) the state was required to set aside 640 acres in every six square miles,



Johnson City—East Tennessee State College

(Courtesy of the College)

"where existing claims will allow the same," which should be appropriated "for the use of schools for the instruction of children forever."²

This ambitious educational program, unfortunately for the people of the state, was not carried out according to the original intent and purpose of the law. Instead, it became a political football, used by every politician, until the whole educational picture was clouded with confusion. Indeed, as one author has written, "The history of the common schools is . . . the history of public lands . . . , and the history of public lands in this State is the history of confusion."³ The underlying reason for the failure and confusion lay in the fact that much of the territory designated for schools had already been pre-empted by ambitious settlers who had crossed the mountains and established homes. Although these people had been warned on various occasions that the lands were within the Indian boundaries (by the Treaty of Hopewell, for example, in 1785, they were informed that they forfeited "the protection of the United States"), they came anyway. They cleared and improved land, held it against Indian assaults, and contended that "every acre had been bought with drops of blood."⁴ Governor Sevier in 1806 expressed to the legislators the hope that this "worthy and deserving class of citizens" would be treated in a lenient manner and be given the "patronage and indulgence of a liberal and patriotic legislature."⁵ In other words, he suggested, to the detriment of the cause of education, that the squatters be given easy terms in making their payments. The lawmakers to whom Sevier spoke, not to mention succeeding legislators, were most indulgent with the pioneers, and the result was that the schools received little of a material nature from the lands. Indeed, James Knox Polk revealed in 1823 that although the total amount of land made available to the state for educational purposes in 1806 amounted to nearly 450,000 acres, only 22,705 acres had been realized by the schools by 1823. Polk, then a member of the state house of representatives, argued that all of the good lands had been occupied by settlers, and that which remained in "great part . . . consists of barrens and mountains that is not worth the annual tax required to be paid to the government"⁶ Thus, those who in 1806 believed that public lands would afford the financial panacea for all the state's educational ills were, within little more than a decade, to be sadly disappointed.

Private Schools and Academies—As has been mentioned earlier, the private schools and academies were the first educational establishments in the state and became the foundation of the educational structure. Before 1806 several academies had been established, some of which had become or soon were to become colleges. Among them were: Martin (Washington College), near Jonesboro; Balch's (Greeneville College), at Greeneville; Davidson (Cumberland College) and Valadolid, in Nashville; Carrick's (Blount College), in Knoxville; and Hillham Female Academy (changed to Fisk Female Academy in 1806). In that year, however, came the Compact of 1806, in which 100,000 acres were appropriated for the

benefit of the academies, and the state legislature authorized the establishment of an academy and appointed trustees therefor in each of the twenty-seven counties. People interested in education were to be disappointed, however, for the academies received few returns from the 100,000 acres. Some, like Tracy Academy in Dickson County, could not begin operation immediately. The doors of Tracy were not opened until nearly two decades after the chartering act was passed, and some chartered schools never opened.⁷

The struggle of the academies to obtain the returns promised them in the act of 1806 continued, but squatters on the school lands fought just as tenaciously to secure title without payment, or to postpone payment. In 1827 one thousand citizens south of the French Broad and Holston rivers sought legislative relief. They believed their case was without "a parallel in the history of American policy."

Shall it be said of Tennesseans [they asked], who are so justly famed for the ardor with which they pressed to Orleans . . . and so gravely met and gloriously defeated, the invaders, that they have turned round on their fellow-citizens, south of the French-Broad and have coolly [*sic*] calmly and deliberately taken from them . . . their blood bought lands? . . . Shall the forlorn widow be driven from her cottage to seek a shelter she knows not where? Shall that portion of the orphan's patrimony be taken from them [*sic*] which a father sacrificed his life to procure? Cannot even respite be vouchsafed unless we go with money in our hands and prostrate ourselves at the feet of the College Trustees, who, it appears, are about to become lords of our soil?⁸

Affected by the political pressure of the squatters, the legislators enacted a measure (contingent upon agreement and acceptance by the academy trustees) which would effect a transfer to the academies of \$35,000 in stock of the Bank of Tennessee in lieu of the land claimed by the citizens of the French Broad and Holston country. This legislation, however, was unacceptable to the trustees. In 1829 the lawmakers offered academy trustees 11,520 acres south of the Hiwassee River in exchange for the academy lands south of the French Broad and Holston. The trustees refused to accept this settlement also, but, in 1838, "wearied [*sic*] into submission" by repeated offers of compromise, they accepted 11,520 acres. Later in that year, however, they relinquished this land to the state in exchange for the distribution among the academies of \$18,000 a year from the dividends on the school fund deposited in the Bank of Tennessee.⁹

The amount of money received from the state was indeed small, but most academies had other funds with which to operate. Funds came from a variety of sources. Tuition was always an important and dependable source, and varied in amount from place to place. At Jacob Voorhies' "classical academy" in Charlotte it was only thirty dollars for the academic year. Trustees of the Nashville Female Academy advertised in 1829 that tuition, board, washing, firewood, candles, and servant hire would cost only seventy dollars for a five-months session. Tuition at

Bolivar Male Academy in 1835 was \$51.50, and board was furnished at thirty-five dollars for a five-months session. Financial support also came from the sale of stock. Trustees operated academies primarily for education and not for profit, but not infrequently charters would specify that the residue of profits, after operational expenses had been taken out, should accrue to stockholders. This sometimes would encourage persons to purchase stock who would not do so otherwise. The lottery also was used, and served as an important source of revenue. Typical was one held in Nashville in 1833 for Harpeth Male and Female Academies, in which tickets sold for five dollars. The first prize was \$5,000, and other prizes were awarded, amounting in all to \$33,660. A lottery of \$8,000 was authorized for Somerville Male and Female Academies in 1830, and several years later one for Lexington Male Academy was planned in which the first prize was 121 acres, complete with a sawmill and gristmill. Personal gifts from wealthy patrons was still another source of funds for operation. Turner Lawrence supplied a building for a Nashville school, and the trustees named the school for Lawrence. In the early 1840's, when Baptist leaders attempted to establish a school at Murfreesboro, they openly advertised that the donor of \$25,000 could name the institution.¹⁰

The academies actually were quasi-public institutions, yet patrons considered them as private schools, since management generally was vested in a board of trustees consisting of private citizens named in the charter of incorporation. Academies were looked upon with respect and generally were considered to be preparatory schools for college. The state legislators in 1817 expressed their general purpose as follows:

Whereas institutions of learning, both academies and colleges, should ever be under the fostering care of this legislature, and in their connexion [*sic*] with each other, form a complete sytem of education, . . . Be it enacted . . . that all the academies of this State shall be considered as schools preparatory to the introduction of students into the colleges of this state.¹¹

A variety of courses was offered by able teachers at most of the schools. Jacob Voorhies, at Charlotte, offered a "liberal education," with emphasis upon Latin, Greek, French, and English languages. Instructors at Tracy Academy, in the same town, offered studies in the classical languages, higher mathematics, and science. The faculty of Manhattan School in Maury County announced in 1821 that their offerings included English grammar, trigonometry, plane and spherical geometry, geography, navigation, logic, natural philosophy, and "several other branches too tedious to mention." Students at Bolivar Male Academy could study spelling, reading, geography, history, rhetoric, logic, astronomy, higher mathematics, Latin, Greek, French, and Hebrew. Joseph Estabrook, president of East Tennessee College, in 1838 pointed to the high quality of work done at academies, and termed their demand for able teachers a "cheering circumstance."¹²

Education for women received emphasis in the ante bellum period. Fisk Fe-

male Academy, chartered in 1806 after Sampson Williams and Moses Fisk each gave 1,000 acres of Overton County land, was claimed to have been the first chartered school for girls in the South.¹³

The Nashville Female Academy, established in 1816,* for many years was considered one of the outstanding schools in the South. It met with success from the beginning, which was due partly, no doubt, to the good public relations which the administration maintained. President James Monroe was invited to make an address at the school in 1819. The President told his audience of 200 students and faculty members that he could not "express in terms too strong the satisfaction . . . [which] a view of the seminary" gave him. He may have evoked twitters of laughter or perhaps even applause, when he concluded that "The female presents capacities for improvements, and has equal claims to it, with the other sex."¹⁴

The Nashville academy reached its peak during the administration of the Reverend Collins D. Elliott, who served as principal from 1844 to 1866. A strict disciplinarian and a strong believer in education for women, Elliott administered an extensive program. As early as 1833 students of the French language were placed under the supervision of their professor, a native of France, who required the young ladies to converse in French at their meals. Able music instructors were imported from Europe. A wide variety of subjects was taught, but the "Ornamental Department"—vocal music, instrumental music, painting, and fancy needle work—was the most popular. Elliott strongly disapproved of the young ladies having "dates." In his opinion, a lady's education ended "as soon as she begins to see company." He announced firmly in 1852 that:

The young ladies see no company; never visit but with our approbation; read no novels; [and] never leave the yard but in company with a teacher.

Only once, in 1857, Elliott raised the tuition. In that year \$275 was required to defray all expenses in the collegiate department, with smaller fees in the academic and preparatory departments, for the academic year of forty-two weeks. The increase was justified, Elliott said, because \$40,000 had been spent on new bath-rooms, furniture, and other improvements. "The judicious use of the Bath room is . . . worth the increased charge, . . ." he wrote. According to a Nashville newspaper, hundreds of students were enrolled, and the school enjoyed prosperity "unparalleled in the history of female schools." Its buildings were described as some of "the most extensive in the United States devoted to female education."¹⁵

The Nashville Female Academy was non-sectarian, but many girls' schools were established and operated by religious and fraternal organizations. The Cumberland Female Academy of McMinnville was financed by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and prominent members of that denomination also were associated with the LaGrange Female College, near Memphis. The Odd Fellows Insti-

* The school did not receive a charter until the following year.

tute offered a variety of subjects at Paris, as did the Macon Masonic College at Macon. Other sectarian schools for girls were established in Knoxville, Memphis, Gallatin, Rogersville, Murfreesboro, Lebanon, and other Tennessee towns in all three sections of the state.¹⁶

The academies declined considerably after the Civil War, as will be observed in a later chapter. Several hundred had been established by 1861.

Numerous private elementary schools existed in all parts of the state, and aimed at teaching the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Typical was Derry Ryan's English School in Knoxville, where pupils were taught "spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic, . . . at \$10 per annum." Jesse Ross and John Donnegan maintained a similar school on Piney River which featured the same course of study. Many of these, of short duration, centered around the teacher, who continued his school as long as patrons in sufficient numbers would pay the required tuition. A Nashville teacher in 1831 organized a school on the second floor of a store on College Street. Leonard Lane Leech conducted a primary school on the third floor of his general merchandise store in Charlotte, and W. B. Bell operated his Cloverdale school on Barton's Creek (Dickson County) in his own home.¹⁷

Public Schools—Like the academies, the public schools received few returns from the lands granted them in the Compact of 1806. They were frequent subjects for legislation, however, and politicians, with " 'common schools' on their lips . . . [but] office, office only, . . . in the heart" pledged devotion to the cause of education in every legislative session. A dozen statutes concerning schools and lands were enacted during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, but little was done toward establishing a workable public school system. Occasional complaints were made to the federal Congress, and, as mentioned earlier, in 1823 legislators drafted a memorial addressed to Congress in which they stated that only 22,705 acres had been sold from the large congressional grant of 1806. In the same session, legislators began to dispose of certain poor lands north and east of the Congressional Reservation Line at twelve and one-half cents per acre. Emoluments received from the sale and from state taxes on this land were to constitute a "perpetual and exclusive . . . common school" fund. The money would be deposited in the New State Bank, and the interest therefrom used for the education of the poor in each county.¹⁸

Although noble in its aims, the public school law of 1823 had the effect of associating the public schools with the stigma of poverty, and some parents therefore refused to enroll their children. Provisions of the act were elaborated upon in 1825, and again in 1827. By the act of 1827 the school fund was expanded by including within it the following: (1) about one-half of the capital and interest of the New State Bank, (2) all proceeds from the sale of lands in the Hiwassee District, (3) vacant and unappropriated lands, (4) the state's stock in the Old State Bank, (5) all rents and profits from school lands, (6) donations from individuals,



Cleveland—Walker Hall, Lee College

and (7) all escheated property. The law provided for five trustees in each county, who would select five to seven county commissioners of education to superintend the disbursing of the school funds. The funds were allocated to each county on the basis of free white population. Much of the school money was lost by the inept management of the commissioners. Some loaned the money to friends, others spent it unwisely, and the schools received little tangible benefits. A serious defect in the law, obviously, was the lack of a provision for a centralized authority to assume responsibility. There was no provision as to how long the school term should last, when it should begin, or what qualifications teachers should have or what they should be paid. The statute did not remove the taint of pauperism from the system. One writer has summarized the public school situation in 1834 by asserting that "three significant facts" were obvious: that the public school system was universally regarded as existing for paupers, that it depended on the school lands and bank stock for nearly all its revenue, and that there was no semblance of organization about it.¹⁹

Delegates to the constitutional convention of 1834 gave considerable attention to the matter of education.

Knowledge, learning, and virtue [they wrote into the document], being essential to the preservation of republican institutions, and the diffusion of the opportunities and advantages of education throughout the different portions of the State, being highly conducive to the promotion of this end, it

shall be the duty of the General Assembly, in all future periods of this government, to cherish literature and science.²⁰

Furthermore, the constitution provided that the common school fund should include "all the lands and proceeds thereof, dividends, stocks, and other property of every description" which the general assembly had specified in earlier sessions. This money was to constitute a "perpetual fund," and the interest therefrom should be apportioned among the common schools of the state. A board of appointed commissioners superintended the fund, and reported its disbursements to the general assembly from time to time.²¹

The new constitution was adopted in 1835, and in the same year the general assembly convened. Under the guidance of Senator William Ledbetter, of Rutherford County, a measure was enacted which created the office of superintendent of public instruction. The superintendent, the comptroller, and the treasurer were to constitute a "State Board of Common School Commissioners." The superintendent was elected by the general assembly for a two-year term, at an annual salary of \$1,500. Furthermore, the act required that the public school fund, which had been distributed among the county commissioners, be returned to the state and disbursed by the superintendent. Two years later the school fund was increased and deposited in the Bank of Tennessee. The bank, in turn, was required to set aside \$100,000 of its annual dividends to be paid to the common schools. The fund remained in the bank until the Civil War, at which time it was spent for the defense of the state. The sum of \$100,000 which the bank paid annually was the main support of the common schools system until the war.²²

Colonel Robert H. McEwen, of Davidson County, became the first state superintendent, and immediately sought to collect the school fund. To do this he was forced to institute suit in some counties, because the fund, according to his testimony, was in a "scattered . . . and very precarious condition . . ." One hundred fifty thousand dollars was on loan, and McEwen doubted that one-half of it could ever be collected.²³

McEwen's failure to collect the money, together with his alleged mishandling of school funds, began to be discussed in 1838. By the following year criticism had mounted. Governor Polk, while not placing the blame directly upon McEwen, asked the legislature of 1839 to provide more adequate safeguards to prevent further exploitation of the fund. A legislative committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and subsequently charged that McEwen had misappropriated more than \$120,000. Suit was instituted against the superintendent, and he was forced to pay about nine per cent of the amount. McEwen was never accused of embezzlement, but only of poor judgment. He had collected public school funds, but had loaned much of the money, the investigation showed, to private individuals and business organizations. Many of his friends and relatives had borrowed from the fund, including McEwen, Whiteman and Company, of which the superintendent

was a partner. Borrowers had every intention of repaying with interest, but the Panic of 1837 rendered many insolvent. To complicate matters further, some sheriffs, in executing judgments, collected school funds, and then failed or refused to pay in the proceeds to the comptroller. The superintendent, in his own defense, testified that the fund "has been time after time plundered by a thousand hands." McEwen was permitted to complete his term, but he was not a candidate for reelection in 1840.²⁴

The investigation damaged the prestige of the public schools. Robert P. Currin and Scott Terry served as superintendents during the next four years, but they apparently were only figureheads. In 1843 Governor James C. Jones recommended the abolition of the office, and at the termination of Terry's term the legislature complied. The duties of the superintendent had been largely fiscal and were transferred to the state treasurer; there they remained until after the Civil War. One student of the times has characterized the period of 1839-1844 as one of "reaction" against public schools. The "swing of the pendulum in the other direction was accelerated by the misfortunes of the system's first superintendent, by the failure of the laws passed to bring about the immediate and complete betterment of conditions . . . and by the increasing gravity of those never-ending financial difficulties that so hampered and harassed the state of Tennessee all through the ante-bellum period."²⁵

During the decade following the abolition of the superintendent's office confusion reigned, as governors, legislators, and private citizens prescribed panaceas. A citizen from Montgomery County in 1851 wrote to advise that the public schools accomplished "little or nothing,"—a result which was embarrassingly evident to the legislators. One careful student has pointed out that "not one conspicuous educational law . . . [was] passed" from 1838 to 1853. Although numerous bills were introduced, some of which became law, all serious attempts to revise and vitalize "a dead or dying school system" met with failure.²⁶

Andrew Johnson assumed the governorship in 1853 and made a determined effort to improve the educational framework. A man to whom circumstance had denied the advantages of a formal education, Johnson as governor was zealous in his efforts to provide free public education for the youth of the time. He no doubt had observed with dissatisfaction the 1850 census reports which indicated that from a total white population of 316,409 persons over twenty years of age, 77,522 could neither read nor write. In his first message to the legislature he decried the fact that the school system "falls very far short" of the goal set at the constitutional convention of 1834, and he sought legislative support of a program which would "carry out the high behest of the constitution," so that "the rising generation will realize the benefits that will necessarily flow from it." To develop such a program he recommended a tax levied on the people "of the whole state." The returns therefrom, when added to the school fund, would "give life and energy to our dying or dead system of common school education."²⁷

The legislators responded to the Governor's plea and passed what one writer described as "the most important act for common schools . . . in Tennessee before the Civil War." The measure, as finally enacted, provided for a poll tax of twenty-five cents on free males and a property tax of two and one-half cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable property. All attempts to revive the office of state superintendent were defeated, but the tax, small as it was, practically doubled the amount of funds available for the public school program. An analysis of the votes on the act shows that the margin of victory came from East Tennessee legislators. West Tennesseans in the general assembly voted against the measure, and those of the central division were cool toward it.²⁸

Supporters of education received encouragement from the law of 1853, and no doubt they would have made the program succeed had not the Civil War interrupted it a few years later. Two years after the enactment of 1853, a measure designed to improve the quality of education provided that county courts elect a board whose duties included that of examining all applicants for teaching positions in their respective counties. "Thorough" examinations* were to be administered in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and English grammar, and teachers not adjudged "competent" were not employed. Objection was raised, and the measure was repealed two years later.²⁹

During the decade before the Civil War, Nashville and Memphis established city systems of public education. In June, 1852, members of the city council of Nashville appointed Alfred Hume (later known as the "father of the Nashville public schools") to study city systems in the North and East and to report his findings. After Hume had examined the programs in Cleveland, Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, he presented to the council a report which became the basis of Nashville's system. To raise money for schools, the council levied a poll tax of two dollars on all free white males between the ages of twenty-one and fifty and a property tax of twenty cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable real estate. High standards must have been maintained, because during the first year nineteen students were suspended for failure and insubordination. By 1860 five schools had been established, with a total enrollment of 1,892 pupils and thirty-five teachers. A graded system was inaugurated, with an elementary school and a high school. Fundamentals were taught in the former, but in the high school advanced mathematics and chemistry were offered. The Memphis system was established in 1858, on the eve of the Civil War. All white children were admitted free. By 1861 seventeen schools with 1,500 pupils were in operation.³⁰

The public school program during the ante bellum period was, therefore, only partly successful. Although there were nearly 3,000 public schools in operation by 1860, not to mention the academies and private schools, still Tennessee had one of the highest rates of illiteracy in the country. According to the census of 1860,

* Later, attempts at examination proved to be a farce. The same probably was true of these, but no evidence either way has been uncovered.

more than 27,000 men and 43,000 women (over twenty years of age) could neither read nor write. In comparison with neighboring states, and two Northern states, Tennessee stood as follows:³¹

<i>State</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>No. Illiterate</i>	<i>Per Cent Illiterate</i>
Alabama	526,271	37,605	7.14%
Arkansas	324,143	23,642	7.29%
Florida	77,747	5,381	6.92%
Georgia	591,550	43,684	7.38%
Kentucky	919,484	67,577	7.34%
Massachusetts	1,221,432	46,262	3.78%
Mississippi	353,899	15,526	4.39%
New York	3,831,590	115,965	3.02%
North Carolina	629,942	68,128	10.81%
South Carolina	291,300	14,792	5.07%
Tennessee	826,722	70,359	8.51%
Texas	420,891	18,414	4.38%
Virginia	1,047,299	74,055	7.07%

Many reasons have been assigned for the lack of success in the public school program. Certainly one was the scattered condition of the population, which, in days of inadequate transportation facilities, made most difficult the matter of maintaining schools in rural areas. This problem, of course, was not peculiar to Tennessee, but it was responsible for the lack of progress in all the Southern states. Lack of adequate funds, caused primarily by the failure of the expected return from the land as provided by the Compact of 1806, was another important reason. Class distinction and the pauper stigma which public schools were forced to sustain also played major roles in the lack of success of the program. The well-to-do parents did not send their children to public schools but to academies and private schools. In many cases wealthy parents employed tutors, as did the father of James G. M. Ramsey, a well-to-do East Tennessee surveyor and landowner. Ramsey, appointed school commissioner in 1829, observed that many proud parents refused to accept free text books, and refused to send their children because "they could not dress them equal to the *quality*."³² Although there were hundreds of politicians who made thousands of speeches in favor of education, few apparently had the foresight—or were willing to cooperate with those who did—in order to establish a workable public school program. Each governor joined the ranks of the well-wishers, but most were like William Trousdale, who admitted that he was "unable to recommend for . . . adoption any specific measure for the improvement of our present system," although he was convinced "of the utter incapacity of our present system to meet the reasonable wishes of the people." Public schools were further hindered by an attitude of indifference, found not infrequently



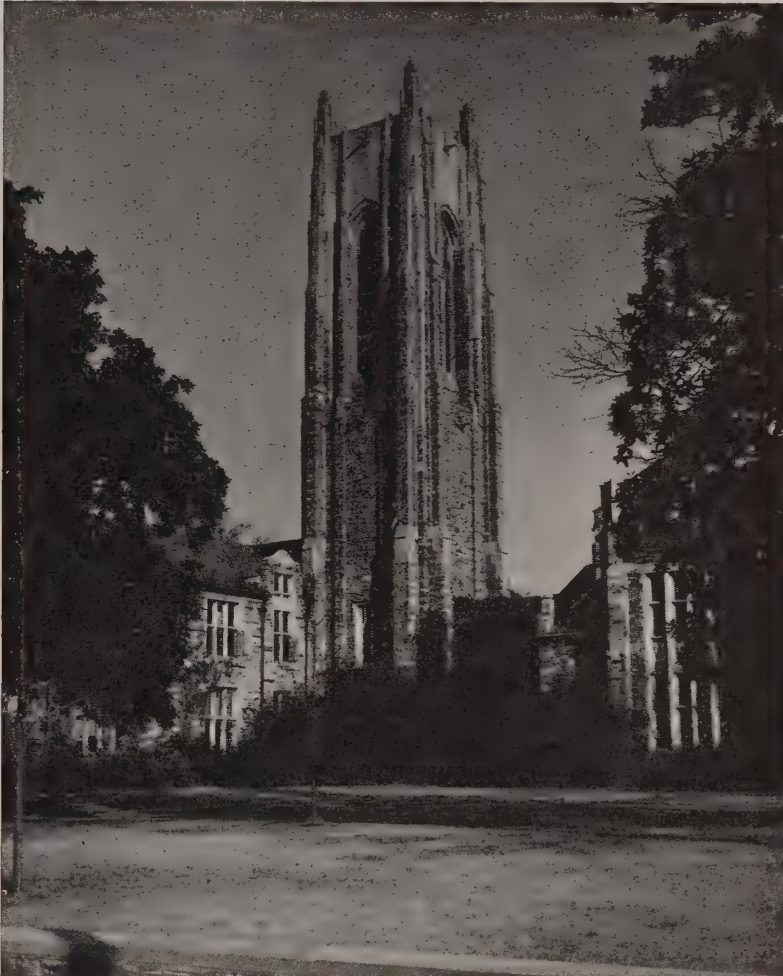
(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Knoxville—Carolyn P. Brown Memorial University Center,
University of Tennessee*

among ignorant preachers, lawyers, and others who had small followings. Typical were the words of one bombastic state representative who, after observing that about ten per cent of the people of the state were illiterate, exclaimed that "book-learning" was "not the only source of information." Asserting that in many cases "book-learning" was "cramping and stupefying," he boasted that the people of Tennessee "are amongst the best observers in the world." He lambasted the colleges of the East and brazenly asserted that "the boys of eighteen in Tennessee, without knowing a letter in the book, are really more shrewd than many who have gone through the course of a common school . . ." ³³ "Common sense" was the one great virtue, and many believed that book learning and common sense were incompatible. Despite this attitude, some progress was made, as has been observed, but the accomplishments of the Johnson period were nullified by the Civil War, and decades elapsed thereafter before a satisfactory school system became a reality.

Colleges—As has been discussed in an earlier chapter, several colleges were established in Tennessee even before the state was admitted to the Union. They were, by necessity, small. The Compact of 1806, however, with its liberal provisions of land caused college trustees to prepare for expansion. It will be recalled that the compact provided a gift of 100,000 acres for the benefit of two colleges, one in East Tennessee and the other in the Cumberland settlements. The land was to be sold at not less than two dollars per acre, except tracts already occupied which might be purchased for a dollar per acre by the squatters. As in the case of the common schools and the academies, the colleges received only a small return from the grant, but to college trustees and administrators the amount seemed sufficient to carry out many of their educational dreams and plans. In Nashville, Davidson Academy was designated as the western recipient of the grant, and its name was changed to Cumberland College. The legislature in 1806 could not agree upon which East Tennessee institution would receive the land grant. Citizens of Hawkins County recommended Rogersville as the "most eligible scite [*sic*] for a college to be established," petitioners from Blount County suggested Maryville, trustees and citizens of Washington College proposed their school in Washington County, and memorialists from Blount College in Knoxville urged that Blount (being most "near the centre of East Tennessee") should receive the money. In the following year, however, legislators enacted Hugh Lawson White's bill to designate Knoxville as the location of "East Tennessee College" and accepted the proposals of the trustees of Blount College to merge its funds and facilities with the new institution. Officials were empowered to confer the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and "any other degree known and used in any college or university in any of the United States." The legislators, imbued with delusions of grandeur, financial adequacy, and academic superiority, apparently had in mind making Knoxville the "Athens of the West."³⁴

Legislators, college trustees and administrators, and friends of the schools in general were in for a rude awakening. As mentioned, the colleges received but small returns from their grants. Complaints were raised immediately by squatters in the granted area protesting that they should not have to pay their hard-earned money for educating the rich men's children, and immediately after the Compact of 1806 was announced petitioners flooded the legislature with memorials for relief. Immediately the legislators began to compromise. It had been provided in 1806 that squatters could pay for their lands on the installment plan, and in 1807 the first payment was postponed for two years. The petitions continued, and in 1809 payments were postponed until 1811; in 1811 they were postponed indefinitely. Succeeding legislatures continued the practice for over a decade; as the interest on the money became due the legislators postponed payment of it. In 1823 the lawmakers resolved to indulge the debtors no more. An act was passed remitting to them one-third of the principal and interest due, but commanded that the remaining two-thirds be paid to the



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—Tower at Scarritt College

college trustees in seven annual installments, at six per cent interest. The law-makers hoped to "put it out of the power of the Legislature to interfere hereafter by indulging the debtors . . ." Many settlers made payments in 1824, but in the following year they refused to pay more. Many parcels of land were foreclosed upon and sold, and this of course brought loud protests from the settlers. In 1829 the legislators undertook to make another settlement. This time they proposed to the college trustees that they be given 11,520 acres in the Ocoee District, south of the Hiwassee River, where the Indian title had not yet been extinguished, in exchange for their claims to the land in the French Broad-Holston area. The trustees

of East Tennessee College, harassed by poverty and the protracted state of uncertainty, accepted the proposition, but did not receive the promised returns until nearly a decade later. Trustees of the Middle Tennessee institution refused, however, and a settlement with them was made finally in 1838 when they accepted 11,520 acres in the Ocoee District where the Cherokees had been forced to evacuate. Other relatively small tracts of land were received from time to time by both colleges, but neither realized much from the sales. Land was too cheap and too plentiful.³⁵

Funds were received from other sources also. In 1826 the Nashville institution was granted legislative authority to raise \$200,000 by means of a lottery. Earlier, in 1810, the trustees of the East Tennessee school held a lottery to raise \$55,000 in which they sought to use the names and prestige of President James Monroe and former President Thomas Jefferson as help to sell tickets. Tuition fees brought in a small amount of income, and private gifts and subscriptions added small but helpful sums. Not infrequently, however, were the trustees forced to borrow money upon their own security.³⁶

As has been mentioned earlier, Davidson Academy became Cumberland College in 1806. The new college opened its doors September 1, 1807, with Thomas B. Craighead as president. He was succeeded in 1810 by James Priestly who continued in office until 1816, at which time the college was forced to close because of lack of funds. It was resuscitated in 1822, but "the brightest period in the annals" of the institution came in 1824 when the trustees "waked from their lethargy" and called to the presidency Doctor Philip Lindsley.³⁷

The college administrator was born in New Jersey in 1786, and was graduated at the age of eighteen from the College of New Jersey (Princeton). He was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian church but chose a career of teaching rather than the ministry. In 1817 he was offered the presidency of Transylvania College in Kentucky but he declined in order to become vice president of his alma mater. A few years later he was offered the presidency of Princeton; however, he refused and accepted the Nashville offer. Apparently he saw great potentialities in the Tennessee institution and had as a goal that of building the school to where it would be recognized as the leading institution of the West. In keeping with his plans for expansion, the trustees in 1826 petitioned the legislature to seek an adjustment of the land question, allow them to raise funds by lottery, and change the name of the college to "The University of the State of Tennessee." The last mentioned request precipitated debate and speech-making which lasted for several days. Senator Aaron V. Brown defended the request of the college, and the senate by a majority of one voted to change the name as requested. The name was changed by members of the house, however, from "State of Tennessee" to "Nashville," and the senate concurred.³⁸

Lindsley served ably for the next quarter of a century, but lack of funds constantly hampered his program. A cholera epidemic in Nashville at mid-century

cut the enrollment considerably, and in 1850 Lindsley resigned to become a professor in the New Albany Theological Seminary. This position he held for three years and then returned to Nashville where he died in 1855. Trustees voted in 1850 to close the school temporarily, and it did not reopen until the year of Lindsley's death. By that year nearly 400 bachelor's, and sixty master's, degrees had been conferred. Over 2,000 students had been enrolled, many of whom became outstanding citizens. The physical properties of the University were estimated to be worth in excess of \$100,000. Many outstanding scholars had been members of the faculty, including Gerard Troost, William Hume, Abram Litton, James Hamilton, and others.³⁹

In 1855 the University was opened again, and it embarked upon a new phase of its work. John Berrien Lindsley, Philip's son, was named chancellor early in that year, and in March he submitted to the board of trustees an elaborate plan for reorganization. He proposed that three departments be opened immediately, to consist of academic, law, and science and philosophy departments. The medical school, which had opened in 1851, continued to operate. The law school, Lindsley believed, would appeal to youth of the entire South. He searched for competent lawyers for instructors and hoped to make the department equal to the law schools of Harvard and the University of Virginia. The science and philosophy department would train men in civil engineering, mathematics, physics, and agricultural chemistry. An interesting part of Lindsley's reorganization program was the suggestion that Western Military Institute be incorporated into the University, and that the military system be used in the school. Western began operation in Kentucky in 1847, and had nearly a half dozen locations in less than ten years. Colonel Bushrod Johnson (later to play a prominent role in the Confederate army) was in charge when the union of the two institutions was agreed upon. The University met with success under the younger Lindsley's administration. On the eve of the Civil War it had 648 students,—a sizable increase from the 154 in 1855. Physical properties were valued at \$300,000.⁴⁰

The present University of Tennessee began as Blount College in 1794 and, as mentioned earlier, became East Tennessee College after the Compact of 1806. This name was used until 1840, at which time it was changed to East Tennessee University. It retained this designation until after the war. The Reverend Samuel Carrick, president of Blount College, was retained as president of the new institution, at a salary of \$450 per annum. The failure of the land grant of 1806 to materialize brought only disappointment to Carrick, and the college ceased operation for over a decade after the president's death in 1809. During the period the trustees tried to raise money principally by lotteries but were not successful. In 1820 Hampden Sidney Academy (in Knoxville) merged its resources with those of the college, and opened in the autumn of 1820 with the former's principal, the Reverend David A. Sherman, as president. A Yale graduate and a New Englander, Sherman was well qualified, and served as chief administrator until 1825.⁴¹

The location of the institution had not been satisfactory, and shortly after Sherman's resignation a committee of trustees began to search for a new location. They soon found a forty-acre hill located about one mile west of the Knox County courthouse which could be purchased for \$600. This land, owned by Pleasant M. Miller, appeared to the trustees to possess qualities which make it "as eligible, almost, as the imagination can conceive."* It was purchased and soon classrooms and dormitories were constructed on it.⁴²

In 1834 Joseph Estabrook, a Dartmouth College graduate then principal of Knoxville Female Academy, was elected president. He served for nearly two decades, and helped advance the college "from almost total prostration to a respectable rank among the educational institutions of the country." During his administration the physical plant was expanded considerably, but he was more than a "brick and mortar" president. High academic quality was demanded, and an able faculty was employed. Applicants for admission were examined in Virgil, Cicero's Orations, Greek, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography. The course of study called for extensive training in Latin and correct usage of the English language. Members of the senior class were required periodically to declaim and debate before the president, and professors were requested to "drill the speakers privately before they appear in public."⁴³

The name was changed in 1840 to East Tennessee University in recognition of President Estabrook's program of expansion. The new charter gave trustees authority, in addition to other rights, to "grant and confer medical degrees . . ." However, it was not until after the Civil War that such a school was established. Estabrook devoted most of his attention to an expansion of the collegiate department and sought to discontinue the preparatory school. He was also interested in teacher training and expanded that program considerably.⁴⁴

Estabrook resigned in 1850, and during the next decade the University had four presidents, and ten years of difficulty. In 1857 it was forced to close, but was reopened the following year. The last two years before the war were years of growth and expansion. Several new buildings, including a gymnasium, were constructed, and the faculty was increased. Early in 1860 a military department was established as a result of a legislative enactment in which the state offered to provide arms and equipment. For the academic year 1860-1861, one hundred and ten students were enrolled.⁴⁵

Cumberland University, at Lebanon, was founded in 1842 under the auspices of Cumberland Presbyterians. The first classes were taught in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Lebanon, but by 1844 one building had been completed and a charter had been granted. Despite early financial difficulties, the institution grew rapidly. Eighty-two students enrolled in 1845. Two years later a law department was opened, in spite of vigorous opposition from leading men of the

* The hill was known as "Barbara Hill," in honor of Barbara Blount.

church, who believed that a school of theology should come first. The law school enjoyed immediate success and soon ranked with some of the well-known schools of the North in quality of scholarship. Shortly before the outbreak of the war the school had an enrollment of nearly five hundred, 188 being enrolled in the law department.⁴⁶

The forerunner of Southwestern at Memphis was Stewart College at Clarksville.* In 1848 the Masonic Order acquired title to the property of Clarksville Academy but met with little success in its efforts to operate an institution of higher learning. In 1855 the property was purchased by the Presbyterian Synod of Nashville, and in the autumn of that year a school was opened under the name of "Stewart College," with six faculty members. Emphasis was placed upon classical language and literature. President R. B. McMullen expressed the hope in 1861 that the war might be a short one and that the college could continue operation. Unfortunately for the school and the nation, his hope was not realized, and the school soon closed for the duration.⁴⁷

Many other colleges, most of them small in enrollment, were established during the ante bellum period. Greeneville College, chartered in 1794, had a precarious existence during its early years when Hezekiah Balch, a Presbyterian minister, struggled to keep it in operation. After the war, Greeneville was consolidated with Tusculum College which in 1844 had been organized from an academy with the same name. Samuel Doak, who established Tusculum, in 1794 had received a charter for Martin Academy which later became Washington College. Maryville College, which began in 1819 as Southern and Western Theological Seminary, also was founded by Presbyterians. It was closed temporarily in 1861, with the outbreak of the War. Other colleges organized during the ante bellum period were: Jackson, which began in 1832 in Maury County; West Tennessee College established in Jackson as an academy in 1834; Union University,** founded in Murfreesboro in 1845; Bethel College, a Cumberland Presbyterian school at McMoresville (later moved to McKenzie), 1842; Mossy Creek Baptist Seminary (a forerunner of Carson-Newman College), 1851; Lambuth, established by Presbyterians but taken over by Methodists and chartered in 1842 at Jackson; and various others, some of which closed before 1861. One of the most promising institutions chartered before the war was the University of the South, at Sewanee. The trustees received a charter of incorporation in 1858 and proposed to offer an extensive program in arts and science. English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Oriental languages were to be taught, in addition to civil engineering, natural science, chemistry, and agriculture. Bishop Leonidas Polk laid the cornerstone in 1860 and consecrated the institution "for the cultivation of true religion, learning,

* Austin Peay State College was created in 1927, and in 1929 began operation on the grounds recently vacated by Southwestern.

** West Tennessee College and Union University merged in 1875 under the latter's name, and is located at Jackson.

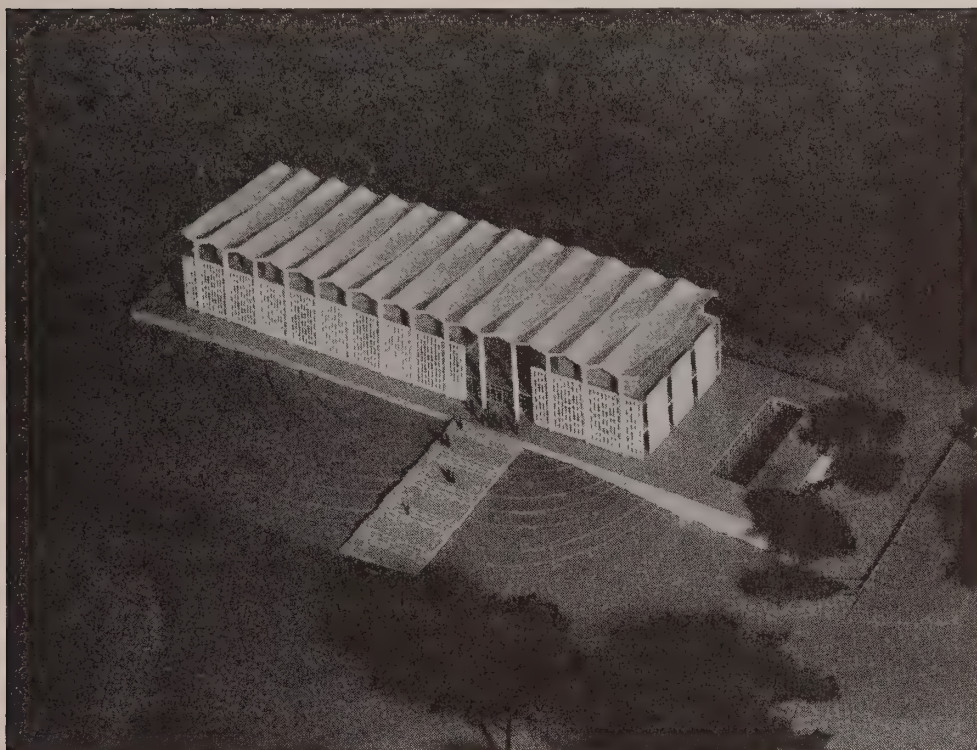
and virtues." By the winter of 1860-1861 Bishops Polk and Stephen Elliot had occupied "University Place," but ominous war clouds portended a conflagration which would prevent the college from functioning until after 1865.⁴⁸

Literary societies flourished at all of the colleges during the ante bellum period, and members vied with each other in composition and oratory. Within a few weeks after Cumberland University was opened, the Amasagassean Literary Society was organized, soon to be followed by the Heurethelian Society in 1844. At the University of Nashville the Erosophian and Agatheridan societies were formed early in the history of the institution, and debated such subjects as the justification of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots; whether slavery as practiced in the United States was an evil; whether the United States should aid the Latin American republics if the Holy Alliance attempted the subjugation of those countries; the relative merits of secession; and whether the students should "cultivate the acquaintance of the ladies."⁴⁹

At East Tennessee University members of the Chi Delta and the Philomathesian societies debated similar subjects, including that of the justification of the execution of Mary of Scots, the relative merits of the political parties, and such other weighty matters as truth, ambition, and women. The topic, "Should the South secede if a Black Republican is elected President?" was prepared in 1860 but not debated because of the incendiary nature of the topic.⁵⁰

Disciplinary problems faced most of the college executives from time to time. In 1821 an extensive set of rules and regulations was prepared at East Tennessee College. Students were required to show "reverence and obedience" to the faculty, and might be expelled if guilty of any of the following: blasphemy, robbery, fornication, theft, forgery, duelling, or other offences. If any student should "assault, wound or strike the President, a professor or tutor, or . . . maliciously or designedly break their windows or doors" he was to be expelled. "Fighting, striking, quarrelling, challenging, turbulent words or behavior, wearing women's apparel, fraud, lying, defamation," playing "at billiards, cards or dice or any other unlawful game" were offenses punishable only by firm admonition. Professors were charged with maintaining order on the campus, in the classrooms, and in the dormitories at all times. They were required to visit and inspect dormitory rooms frequently, and should at any time they find "a student absent, or seeing any other deficiency," they were to "note the crime, on paper, . . . and . . . [leave] it in the President's room . . ." One student at East Tennessee College was dismissed in 1836 for participating in "an affray," and another was suspended for two months for "carrying arms and attempting to use them." Two Professors, Lyman and Kirkpatrick, brought charges in 1842 against a student for "harboring a profligate woman in his room during a portion of the night" and also for having exhibited a bowie

* While the last named topic must have precipitated a lively discussion, it should be remembered that women were not admitted to the University of Nashville. They were at "female seminaries" and at home.



(Courtesy of Mann & Harrover)

Memphis—Model of Memphis Fine Arts Center, Overton Park

knife when accosted. Upon appearing before the discipline committee the accused student readily admitted the presence of the woman but asserted that she was "on the Hill without his knowledge," and that another student was implicated. The "other student" then was apprehended, and both men expelled.⁵¹

Rules similar to those of East Tennessee College were enforced at the University of Nashville. In 1844 a student was suspended indefinitely for spending time "at a house of dissipation." Another was dismissed in 1842, not for moral turpitude but for poor scholarship, which faculty members described in the records as being "about nothing."⁵²

Adult Education—Little attention was given to adult education during the first several decades after Tennessee's admission to the Union. In the period of reform (1830-1860) some attention was given to the formation of lyceums, libraries, and organizations for "literary, intellectual and moral improvement." Many of the adults who had grown up in the frontier environment could not read and made

little demand for mental improvement. Many went to church, heard political speeches, and read such newspapers as were available.

A lyceum—probably the first in the state—was formed in Nashville in 1830 at the insistence of William G. Hunt, editor of the *National Banner and Nashville Whig*. In his original proposal for organization, he suggested weekly meetings to study and discuss geography, history, natural philosophy, chemistry, “and other branches of science and literature.” Ladies especially were invited, and members were urged to bring visitors. During the first season (November, 1830, to May, 1831), over a dozen prominent lecturers appeared before the group and discussed a variety of subjects. Doctor Gerard Troost, a member of the faculty of the University of Nashville, frequently was in demand. In addition to sponsoring lecturers, the lyceum members formed a library. Each member was required to give at least one book and to solicit reading material from non-members. In 1832 books from the Nashville Library were transferred to the lyceum library,* which consisted of 830 volumes in May, 1832. The editor of a Nashville paper boasted that “no Lyceum . . . has a larger, or more choice library than our own.”⁵³

The Knoxville Lyceum was formed in 1831. It had thirty members whose goals were similar to those of the Nashville group. Members sought to establish a library and to collect plants and minerals. Like the Nashville lyceum members, they sponsored lectures on a variety of topics, including chemistry, mineralogy, astronomy, internal resources of East Tennessee, antiquities and history of Tennessee, character of Charles V and of Napoleon, and “modern eloquence.”⁵⁴

Catering to a more select group was “A Society for the Advancement of Literature and Science in the State of Tennessee,” which was organized in Nashville in 1835. Its members sought to promote science and literature by having periodic meetings at which learned discussions would be carried on. A similar group, known as the “Knoxville Junto,” was formed in Knoxville in 1838 “for the purpose of literary, intellectual and moral improvement.” One year after the Nashville group had organized, the “Tennessee Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge” was formed in Nashville, with Return Jonathan Meigs, II, as its first president. Its purpose was to “endeavor to concentrate the efforts of the educated gentlemen throughout the State, by a frequent interchange of opinions through the medium of auxiliary associations hereafter to be formed.” Meigs proposed to publish a scholarly journal, collect historical records, and sponsor public addresses on literary and scientific subjects, but little apparently was accomplished.⁵⁵

Groups of adults were organized periodically for the study and preservation of history. In 1820 “The Tennessee Antiquarian Society” was formed at Nashville to encourage the preservation of antiquities and historical data, but the group ceased to function after 1823. A decade later Doctor James G. M. Ramsey and

* The books were back in the hands of the Nashville Library Company by 1835. See Mrs. John Trotwood Moore, “The First Century of Library History in Tennessee, 1813-1913,” in *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 6.

other citizens organized a historical society in Knoxville. The East Tennessee Historical Antiquarian Society was chartered in 1848, and the Tennessee Historical Society was formed in 1849. The latter body received a charter in 1850, which defined its aims as collecting and preserving "facts, documents, and materials, relating to the natural, civil and aboriginal history of the State of Tennessee."⁵⁶

Libraries, most of them quite small, were organized in various parts of the state not infrequently. The first reference to a library in the public acts is the incorporation of the Nashville Library Company, in 1813. Two years later the Dickson Library Company was formed at Charlotte. Others soon were formed in Knoxville, Columbia, Memphis, and other towns.⁵⁷

Professional Education—Little progress was made during the ante bellum period in the development of professional training. Tennessee institutions, however, did offer courses in engineering, theology, law, medicine, and teacher training. The licensing system was extremely lax, and many practiced the various professions without the advantages of formal education.

The medical department of the University of Nashville, organized in 1850 by John Berrien Lindsley, was the outstanding professional school of the period. As early as 1829 Philip Lindsley had urged the establishment of a medical college. In 1844 he presented specific plans, but his dream failed to materialize. His son became the moving spirit in the matter, and by 1851 the school opened with seven professors. Lindsley, then 28 years of age, was named dean. The most outstanding faculty member was Paul Fitzsimmons Eve, Georgia-born, but who had studied in the clinics of famous surgeons of Paris and London and had rendered medical service in the July Revolution in Paris (1830) and the Polish Revolution of 1831. Known as one of the ablest surgeons in America, he frequently performed difficult operations before medical students. Among the first to anesthetize his patients, he used both chloroform and sulphuric ether, although some of his colleagues were skeptical of both. Lindsley required of all candidates for graduation two full years' attendance at the professorial lectures, and three years' service in the office of a practicing physician, composition of a thesis on a topic of the student's own choosing, good moral character, and the attainment of 21 years of age. By the time of the Civil War the school was recognized as one of the best in the country. It had 456 students and ranked second among the medical schools of the nation in enrollment.⁵⁸

Three schools of medicine were established during the 1840's and efforts were made to open another. The Memphis College, with a faculty of eight, began operation in 1846; the Botanico-Medical College of Memphis was founded the same year. The Shelby Medical College was established in Nashville in 1858 by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. All three failed to survive the war. For twenty years concerted efforts were made to establish a medical school at East Tennessee University, and in 1858 a faculty was appointed, but lack of sufficient

state aid coupled with the strife caused by the sectional animosity brought failure.⁵⁹

All church-controlled colleges mentioned earlier offered courses in theology. Perhaps the best known theological school was at Cumberland University, which was established in 1852 but did not begin operation until two years later. Richard Beard, professor of systematic theology, was the ablest faculty member. The Baptist Educational Society of East Tennessee had already formed (in 1851) the Mossy Creek Baptist Seminary for the training of ministers. The name was changed in 1855 to Mossy Creek College. After the Civil War it reopened as Carson College, which was a forerunner of Carson-Newman.⁶⁰

Cumberland University opened a department of civil engineering in 1852. Surveying and construction were taught, and the courses could be completed in one to three years, depending on the amount of preparation in mathematics the student had had before his enrollment. Courses in surveying and civil engineering were proposed at the University of Nashville in 1851, but apparently little attention was given to the program.⁶¹

Young men who wished to enter the legal profession usually "read law" in the office of an established practitioner, not infrequently performing clerical work in exchange for room and board. For a young man with keen mind and ability the profession often was lucrative and usually led to a political career. As early as 1798 state legislators prescribed requirements for admission to the bar. According to the statute, an applicant for a license to practice must pass an examination before two or more judges of the superior court of law and equity, and if adjudged to have "a competent share of law knowledge," and was "a person of upright character," he would be licensed to practice anywhere in the state. No particular period of study was required. The first law school of significance in the state was at Cumberland University. It began operation in 1847 with six students, but by 1860 had an enrollment of nearly 200. Professor Abram Caruthers and other distinguished faculty members gave to the school a reputation for scholarship second to none. In recognition of their capabilities, they were given by the legislature the "same power to grant licenses to practice law in the courts of the state, that the judges of the state now have." A law department was opened at the University of Nashville a few years after the one at Cumberland, and in 1856 the West Tennessee Law School of the City of Memphis was chartered.⁶²

The "English and Scientific Department" at East Tennessee University had as one of its aims, "To qualify young men to become teachers in the common schools and academies." Beginning in 1844 free tuition was provided for two men from each county in East Tennessee who would sign a pledge to devote three succeeding years to teaching after they completed a course of study. In 1855 a bill was introduced providing for the establishment of a normal school for training teachers, but the measure was defeated. The need for better prepared teachers became an issue in the Hatton-Harris gubernatorial race of 1857, but little was done toward training teachers until after the Civil War.⁶³

By the mid-1830's a few leaders stressed agricultural education. By that date the curriculum of several academies included courses in livestock and better farming practices. Although Union University at Murfreesboro did not begin operation until 1845, a charter was granted to trustees in 1841 that specified a department of agriculture was to be included in the school. Both farmers and teachers of agriculture were to be trained. Turner Vaughn, a successful farmer of Wilson County, was selected to teach the courses. In 1846 legislators chartered Franklin College in Davidson County strictly as an agricultural school. It was one of the first in the nation. A regular college curriculum was offered, but each student was required to work on the farm part of each day to help defray his expenses. When the second term began over 100 students were enrolled. The college was established on the grounds of Elm Craig Academy, which earlier had emphasized agriculture and manual labor.⁶⁴

Although educational progress was made during the first six decades of Tennessee's existence as a state, much still remained to be done when the Civil War interrupted the social and economic life of the nation. As has been shown, Tennessee ranked high among the other states in the rate of illiteracy, yet more Tennesseans could read and write than could the people in a number of European countries. In 1846 in England and Wales, for example, of the couples getting married, over one-third affixed their marks instead of their signatures to the applications for licenses. In the French army in 1851, more than one-third of the 311,218 conscripts could neither read nor write, and in parts of Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Balkans, Poland, and Russia, illiteracy was more than ninety per cent.⁶⁵

The majority of the people in Tennessee apparently wanted education, but there were some prominent men whose opposition to learning bordered on fanaticism. Senator T. F. Bradford in 1826 told his fellow legislators, "I am no advocate for these splendid schemes of education," and three years later a candidate for the legislature in the eastern division told voters that East Tennessee College was a "temple of aristocracy," a "monument of folly," a "tomb of extravagance," and a "wild goose scheme" which "closes its doors against the poor man's child. . . ." Local leaders among people in the Ducktown mining area convinced the people that "civilization" was undesirable.⁶⁶ On the other hand, thousands of leaders heralded the advantages of education. While many could not read and write, conversely, many others were college graduates. The South had more people in attendance in colleges, in proportion to population, than did the North, or indeed, any other part of the world.⁶⁷

It is difficult to arrive at the true sentiments of the people by studying campaign speeches of political candidates or even editorial comment in the contemporary newspapers. The recorded wills, however, as transcribed in the records of the county courthouses, were written by people with no intention of misleading anyone or of seeking political office. Consequently, it is possible to arrive at some conclusion regarding educational sentiment from the wills. Thousands of Tennes-



Greeneville—Tusculum College

(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

seans, some of whom were illiterate, told in their wills of their respect for learning and of their desire for their offspring to attend school. Christopher Strong, a Middle Tennessee farmer of moderate means, willed \$7,400 to Clark and Erskine (now Erskine) College in South Carolina to educate "indigent young men" ⁶⁸ William Matlock and Jacob Lampley, of Dickson County, urged that part of their estate go to educate their children. ⁶⁹ Spencer T. Hunt, of Humphreys County, in 1843 bequeathed funds to the state to be used for educating children in two Middle Tennessee counties. ⁷⁰ Quotations from other wills leave the impression of a burning desire on the part of the testators for something better for their children and grandchildren than they had themselves. A few examples will suffice: "sell all unwild [unwilled land] for the purpose of schooling the children"; ⁷¹ "I wish to have my sons well educated should it even require for this purpose the whole of the property which I have given them"; ⁷² "put that money to the use of schooling my children"; ⁷³ "I deside that they [the minor children] be well treated . . . and schooled." ⁷⁴

The oncoming Civil War crowded from the minds of Tennessee farmers everything except that of preparing for the defense of their native land. It was not until after the war that steps were taken in the direction of educational progress.

CHAPTER XXI—NOTES

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4. Edward T. Sanford, *Blount College and the University of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1894), 28-29, 31.
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CHAPTER XXII

Tennessee at Mid-Century

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TO 1860—In his annual legislative message of 1799, Governor John Sevier spoke of the great agricultural advantages enjoyed by Tennesseans. "Providence," he asserted, "has blessed this State with a soil peculiarly calculated for the production of wheat, hemp, flax, cotton, tobacco, and indigo." For the next half century Tennesseans cultivated that soil intensively and produced all of the crops which the governor enumerated with the exception of indigo. Corn was king, but much cotton was raised in the southwestern and south central counties, and millions of pounds of tobacco were produced in the northern counties of Middle Tennessee. Wheat, oats, and a variety of other crops including vegetables, were raised in abundance. Agriculture was unquestionably the chief economic pursuit of the ante bellum Tennesseans, and at mid-century there had been comparatively little industrial development. In 1850 the state had nearly 120,000 farmers, compared to only sixty-six iron workers and only twenty-six industrial weavers.¹

It is impossible to generalize on the subject of agriculture in Tennessee, because of the diverse nature of the soil and climate in the three major divisions of the state. East Tennessee was the first section to be settled, but was the poorest in agricultural production. Much of the land was hilly, and farmers practiced subsistence agriculture. Parts of the section, however, such as Greene County and the river valleys of the French Broad and Holston rivers, were fertile and productive. East Tennessee farmers had no money crops as a specialty, but practiced diversification to a much greater extent than did farmers in other sections; they raised tobacco, cotton, flax, hemp, a variety of fruits and vegetables, and livestock, for home consumption. Many ordinary farmers produced an abundance of meat and foodstuffs so that their diet consisted of an adequate and varied menu. While in most counties the production of livestock, sweet and Irish potatoes, beeswax, and honey had declined by mid-century, several East Tennessee counties—Johnson in particular—increased their production of these commodities. In Greene County in 1860 the wheat crop was four times what it had been ten years earlier. East Tennessee farmers, however, were unable to compete with those of the central and western divisions.²

Middle Tennessee consists of long mountain slopes, plateaus, and undulating

lands, and includes the rich Central Basin and fertile bottoms of the Cumberland, Harpeth, and Tennessee rivers. Its soil was far more productive than that of East Tennessee, and produced an abundant variety of crops. The Basin is surrounded by the less productive Highland Rim. Some of the Rim counties, however, particularly Montgomery, Robertson, and Sumner, contained the rich limestone element comparable to that of the Basin, but the majority were not as productive as the Basin counties. Fentress, for example, on the eastern Rim, had land valued at from thirty cents to one dollar per acre. This was the cheapest land in the state. Agricultural pursuits in the central division were varied, and most farmers practiced "general farming." Most of them had a money crop of cotton, corn, or tobacco, raised livestock, and produced a variety of foodstuffs for home consumption.³

Cotton had been grown by John Donelson in Davidson County as early as 1780, but comparatively little was produced until the cotton gin came into widespread use. Soon after 1800 it became an important crop in the Basin, and by 1804 twenty-four gins were in use within a fifty-mile radius of Nashville. Three years later Robert Jarmon advertised that he manufactured gins on Yellow Creek, and James Robertson testified that the gins were "far superior" to any he had seen and that they would "pick near twice as much" as the "common gins." In 1804 wholesale merchants in Nashville offered fifteen cents per pound for loose cotton and seventeen cents for it when baled. Three years later merchants agreed to pay no more than twelve and fourteen cents, but by 1815 they paid twenty cents. Cotton production in Middle Tennessee declined for two decades after the War of 1812. The western division was opened shortly after the Chickasaw Purchase of 1818, which caused cotton farmers to move westward. Also, for nearly a decade after the War of 1812, almost every year brought a bad season marked by cool summers and early autumn frosts. Not until the last two decades before the Civil War did farmers renew their efforts at extensive cotton production.*⁴

The opening of the western division for settlement caused many Middle Tennessee farmers to migrate, but those who remained increased their production of corn and tobacco. Corn was grown in every county of the state, and farmers in every Middle Tennessee county produced it in abundance. They fed much of it to swine for pork production. Tennessee supplied other states with both corn and pork, and in 1840 raised more corn than any other state in the Union. Tobacco was an important money crop, particularly for the northern counties of Robertson, Montgomery, Sumner and Stewart. The weed was produced in quantities second only to corn in 1840, and in that year the state's yield was surpassed only by that of Kentucky and Virginia. By 1850 Maryland also had surpassed the Volunteer State in tobacco production, but by 1860 Tennessee had regained her spot just behind Kentucky and Virginia.⁵

* The following counties increased their production in 1860 over that of 1840: Cheatham, Giles, Humphreys, Lawrence, Lincoln, Macon, Maury, Montgomery, Rutherford, Stewart, Van Buren, and Warren.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Memphis—The Buckeye Cotton Oil Company

West Tennessee was the last section to be settled, but it soon surpassed the rest of the state in production because of its fertile soil, particularly that of the southwestern counties. At mid-century this comparatively small area produced nearly nine-tenths of the state's cotton crop, and Colonel John Pope had grown the world's finest cotton on his Shelby County farm. In 1851 Pope received, at the London Exposition, a medal for "the best cotton known to the world." Rice and tobacco had been tried as money crops, but the rapid increase in cotton prices caused farmers to put most of their tillable land in the white gold. In 1810 (before West Tennessee was opened for settlement) the Volunteer State had an annual production of only 2,500 bales, but by 1820, fifty thousand bales constituted the yearly harvest. At mid-century the state's production of 194,532 bales was exceeded only by Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina, and on the eve of the Civil War production had been increased 50 per cent over that of 1850.⁶

Farmers practiced livestock husbandry and poultry raising in all sections of

the state. The earliest settlers of East Tennessee had brought beef and milch cattle into the wilderness with them, and James Robertson drove stock overland into the Cumberland area in 1780. Within a few decades the highest type of animal husbandry in the South was found in the Central Basin. Cattle raising showed a steady increase to 1860. In raising horses, mules, oxen, sheep, and swine, the state compared favorably with the other Southern states, and in number of mules and swine it ranked at the top. Poultry—both turkeys and chickens—were raised not only for home consumption but also for the market. Middle Tennessee producers often drove flocks of 750 or more overland to Nashville, where they were put on steamboats whose destination was New Orleans. In some cases drovers would be used all the way to New Orleans, and several flocks of 750 each would be driven at one time through the wilderness to the Gulf of Mexico.⁷

Farmers practiced selective breeding as early as 1812. Merino sheep, Berkshire hogs, and Shorthorn cattle were of especial interest to Tennessee farmers. One of the most successful breeders was Mark Cockrill, who owned and farmed 5,000 acres of Davidson County land located on the Charlotte Pike. For two decades before the war he had only choice cattle, horses and mules, Berkshire hogs, and several thousand sheep—the sheep, he contended, were the best in the world.* Lucius Julius Polk and Ben Harlan of Maury County, Woods S. Miller of Gallatin, and L. C. Coleman of Nashville were some of the other well known breeders of the time. Animals produced by these men brought fabulous prices, and Miller in 1840 wagered \$500 that in any contest his would be judged superior to any in the state.⁸

During the forty-year period before the Civil War agricultural specialists not infrequently were critical of the condition of agriculture in the Volunteer State. Enlightened leaders expressed alarm at the rate at which fertility of the soil was being consumed and washed away, and they urged farmers to adopt more modern practices. Many urged crop rotation, sowing the land in soil building crops, terracing, and contour plowing. Dr. Henry Brooks, of Smith County, in 1829 advised farmers to diversify instead of concentrating so much on cotton and tobacco. Several years later Tolbert Fanning, editor of *The Agriculturalist*, told listeners at the Middle Tennessee Division Fair at Lebanon that he was "astonished to see large fields—lands that were once capable of yielding from ten to fifteen barrels of corn per acre, now not producing, upon an average, four barrels." He urged farmers to terrace and to fertilize.⁹

Dr. Brooks was one of the many reformers who insisted that Tennessee

* His was no idle boast. In 1854 at the World's Fair in London he was awarded a premium for the finest wool in the world. Tennessee legislators presented a medal to him as a testimonial of his "devotion of a long life to the advancement and development of . . . [Tennessee's] agricultural resources and especially to the improvement of wool growing," and a later assembly placed his bust in a position of honor in the capitol. *Nashville Union and American*, December 17, 1854; *Public Acts*, 1853, Resolution XV, 792.

cotton raisers and tobacco growers should turn to silk production. Several decades before Brooks expressed an interest, however, Captain James Miller, of Bearden (Knox County) raised five million silk worms. In 1829 Brooks told legislators of his own experiments with silk worms, the small amount of labor necessary for their culture, and of expected profits. He urged the assembly to appropriate \$200 per annum to procure and distribute among interested citizens silk worm eggs and mulberry seed. Samuel Martin, of Knox County, sent to the same assembly a petition in which he recommended an appropriation of ten dollars to "each female school" to be used for the purchase of eggs and the planting of mulberry trees. Martin, like many others, believed that women were especially well fitted to work in silk production.¹⁰

For the next two decades writers of petitions addressed to the legislature, letters to editors, and editorials in agricultural journals urged farmers of the state to turn to silk production. One Nashville newspaper carried a full column entitled "Culture of Silk" written by a farmer from Dixon Springs, and the Nashville *Republican Banner* published letters from subscribers. All sought silk production as a boon to female workers. According to the farmer from Dixon Springs,

the culture and manufacture of silk is an elegant and tasteful employment for females; and a proficiency in it would far better comport with the noble and heroic character of our country women than being able to thrum a tune on a broken-winded piano, fidget through the lascivious mazes of a German waltz, or play the blushless tomboy in an Italian or French fandango.¹¹

"Eliza," who wrote a letter to the editor of the *Republican Banner*, believed that female labor "is nearly prostrated" because of the great technological improvements, and she urged legislators to "give a premium on cocoons . . . and raw silk, so as to encourage our daughters and domestics and others to engage in this branch of industry." In 1842 a group of Nashville women laid a petition before legislators in which they expressed the belief that the manufacture of silk "will become of such primary importance as to employ . . . many of the Females . . . who are entirely idle" They, too, urged legislators to provide material assistance to prospective silk producers and manufacturers. A Nashville producer was convinced that silk could make Middle Tennessee "equal to the valley of the Piedmont or any region in the Chinese Empire. . . ."¹²

No doubt influenced by this onslaught from the press, Senator John A. Gardner in 1841 urged fellow legislators to offer bounties for cocoons, and they responded by enacting a measure to pay ten cents per pound for cocoons and fifty cents per pound for reeled silk. Also, a "Tennessee Silk Company and Agriculture School" was incorporated, "to teach the art of the culture and manufacture of silk."¹³

Governor Jones appeared for his second inauguration dressed in a suit manufactured by the Tennessee Silk Company from material produced in the state, and

this must have encouraged proponents of silk culture. In 1840 the state produced nearly 1,100 pounds, with the eastern and middle divisions growing over 90 per cent of it. By 1850 silk producers doubled their output of ten years earlier, and led all other states in production. During the 1850's, however, the dream of an Oriental Empire of silk all but vanished. Production in 1860 amounted to only seventy-one pounds, and was limited almost entirely to the counties of Humphreys, Lincoln, and Sevier.¹⁴

Many reforms of a more concrete nature were proposed during the decades immediately preceding the Civil War. An important one was for a better informed farmer. In 1838 a Trenton editor pointed to the need for a better educated agricultural population and urged improvement in "spirit and enterprise" so that Tennessee might be made "one of the most wealthy and independent agricultural States in the Union." In 1841 Governor Jones deplored the fact that Tennesseans look "abroad for . . . articles of comfort and fancy" which might have been produced at home. He urged legislators to "remedy these evils" by "disseminating the necessary information" to all farmers, and by offering them necessary inducement in order to obtain adequate production. Comments of this sort awakened Tennesseans to a need for improvement. The efforts at reform during the two decades have been termed an "agricultural awakening" and a "renaissance" in Tennessee agricultural history.¹⁵

Editors of farm publications (such as *The Agriculturalist*), editors of the urban press, civic leaders, and educators frequently met with farmers at state and county fairs and put before them new ideas in agriculture. All urged crop rotation. They sought to show farmers that continued production of corn, cotton, and tobacco not only would exhaust the soil but would result actually in their earning less money. One writer decried the fact that Kentucky was "rapidly outstripping Tennessee in everything that pertains to the science of Agriculture," and others argued that Tennessee farmers, by their inadequate and obsolete methods, had "frolicked away the cream of the earth." Gideon J. Pillow, in speaking at a Middle Tennessee fair in Maury County (1855), urged farmers to grow less cotton, but to produce more corn, oats, wheat, hay, and raise more livestock.¹⁶

Local agricultural societies did much to enlighten farmers. Their meetings served not only as social gatherings but also as mediums through which ideas and information might be exchanged on various agricultural methods and experiences. Efforts were made from time to time to establish a state agricultural organization, but not until 1841 did the Tennessee State Agricultural Society receive a charter. Wide authority, including permission to establish an agricultural college, was given the organization to improve farm practices. The Society promoted *The Agriculturalist*, edited and published by Tolbert Fanning, John Shelby, and Gerard Troost, and sought to make it the one channel of agricultural information throughout the state. Annual meetings were held, and efforts were made to cooperate with neighboring states in farm production.¹⁷



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Maury County—View of Prosperous Farm

The early enthusiasm for agricultural reform could not have been sustained had it not been for the State Agricultural Bureau, created in 1854. Its chief duties were to sponsor county organizations and to supervise county, division, and state fairs. Under the Bureau, county organizations were formed which, when they complied with certain regulations, received a bounty of \$200, which could be spent in any way beneficial to the agricultural interests of the county. County and state fairs, where farmers exhibited their produce and competed with one another in winning premiums, became very popular. Governor Johnson showed much interest, and in 1855, at his insistence, the legislature authorized the issuance of \$30,000 in state bonds for the purpose of purchasing near Nashville a permanent location for fair grounds and for the construction of the necessary buildings and fixtures. Receiving aid under the act, the people from Sumner County made immediate plans to spend over \$5,000 for grounds and buildings, and interested citizens of other counties soon did likewise. The Act of 1854 also provided \$10,000 for fairs in each of the three major divisions of the state. At all the fairs a great

variety of agricultural and manufactured produce was displayed, and prizes were awarded. In 1855, for example, the Middle Tennessee division offered \$100 for each of the best ten acres of wheat, corn, and cotton, and at the State Fair of the same year prizes exceeded the sum of \$5,000.¹⁸

Agricultural reformers continued their agitation until Southern economic activity was paralyzed by the effects of the Civil War. They had accomplished much, but Tennessee agriculture no doubt would have undergone an even greater transformation had all of their ideas been carried out. Value of land had increased tremendously during the period, and thousands of acres had been improved for cultivation.¹⁹

Labor Supply and Slavery—An adequate labor supply is vital to the success of any agricultural program, and apparently most Tennessee farmers were not lacking in this respect. The close community spirit of frontier days, which had enabled pioneers to "raise" houses, build barns, and clear land, continued throughout the ante bellum period. "Swapping work" was a community custom practiced as a matter of economy and sociability, and "house raisings," corn huskings, and quilting parties were held in every part of the state. No doubt there were thousands of cases every year of a farmer, who, when he had fully hoed and plowed his fields and had several days of idleness in prospect, would take his sons and slaves—if he had a few—and go into a neighbor's field to "catch him up with his work." Celebrations usually came at the end of the day, and large quantities of "red eye" and chewing tobacco were usually on hand for refreshments.²⁰

A more reliable source of labor which the farmer could count on all year was his wife and (usually) a large number of children. They invariably worked by his side in fields of corn and cotton, plowing, hoeing, and doing other necessary work. Children were an economic asset; they went to work when quite young and the expense of their maintenance was negligible. Girls married young and soon had a house full of children. In 1820, for example, John Sowell of Dickson County had eighteen children, six sons being under ten. Willie Balthrop had fourteen children, Thomas Collier had eleven, and Robert West had ten. Randolph Harris and Abraham Harris each had only seven children, but both had five sons under ten years of age which assured them of a labor supply for at least a decade. In Lauderdale County Absalom Coleman Braden had fourteen children, and Imri S. Keller, Ezekiel S. Wakefield, and William Jones each had ten or more. In 1850 Green and Mary Hatton, aged 40 and 39 respectively, had eleven children whose ages ranged from three months to eighteen years. Barnet Baxter, a 48-year-old blacksmith in Greene County, had eleven children in 1850.*²¹ Similar statistics could be presented for most of the other counties.

The wives and children labored unheralded and unchampioned by Northern

* Large families were not confined to Tennessee alone, or even to the agricultural South and West. In Vermont families often were of ten, twelve, and fifteen child-

newspaper editors, rabid abolitionists, and ardent humanitarians; not so, the Negro slave. Practically every Tennessee farmer had a wife and most had children, but only a minority had slaves. In 1860 only 25.5 per cent of Tennessee farmers held slaves, compared with 31.9 per cent for the entire South.²² Yet, the ante bellum agricultural picture is incomplete without a discussion of Negro slavery.

In East Tennessee, where most tillers of the soil pursued subsistence farming, there were comparatively few slaves; yet in the rich river valleys of the Watauga, Holston, and French Broad from Bristol to Chattanooga many farmers held slaves in small numbers. But for the section as a whole, less than 15 per cent of the families owned Negroes. More Africans were held in the Middle Tennessee counties than in the other two divisions, although over half of the farm population was non-slaveholding. The blue grass section of the Cumberland Basin was the stronghold, but a few Negroes could be found in the eastern Rim section. The slaveholder, although usually an owner of few chattels, predominated in West Tennessee. The southwest corner of the state, where cotton was produced in abundance, was the area where the slave population was concentrated to a greater degree than anywhere else. When Tennessee was admitted to the Union approximately one-eighth of the East Tennessee population and about one-fifth of the Middle Tennessee population consisted of blacks. At the end of the slaveholding era, the Negro population in the eastern division had decreased to 8 per cent, but had increased to over 25 per cent in Middle Tennessee. In the western division nearly 40 per cent of the people were blacks.²³

Negroes had been brought into the state soon after the whites came. James Robertson brought a "negro fellow" with him to the Cumberland area in 1779, and in the following year Colonel John Donelson and party were accompanied by Negroes on their voyage from Fort Patrick Henry to the Cumberland bluffs. Thereafter the Negro population increased at a steady pace. When Tennessee became a state Negroes constituted 13.7 per cent of the total population, and by 1820 the 80,107 blacks formed 18.9 per cent of the total. From 1820 to 1830 the Negro population nearly doubled, and from 1830 to 1860 it again increased almost two-fold. The white population did not grow at so rapid a rate, and at the close of the slaveholding period Negroes constituted about one-fourth of the total population. They were employed in a variety of occupations, but the vast majority of them were used in agricultural pursuits.²⁴

As a general rule slaves were treated well by their masters. Tennessee was a state of small landholders and small slaveholders when compared with the states of the deep South, and men like Montgomery Bell who held over 300 slaves in 1850,

ren. In nearby Massachusetts, Russell Sturgis had sixteen children. Virginia records reveal that families reached the dozen level frequently. An Iowa farm woman during the ante bellum period had twenty-three living children, which Avery Craven states was "probably exceptional but not unique." See Craven's *The Repressible Conflict* (University, Louisiana, 1939), 44 ff.

G. A. Washington of Robertson County who held 274 in 1860, and John W. Jones of Fayette County who held 235 in 1850, were indeed rare. Even in the cotton counties of the southwest the average holder owned not more than four slaves. The result was that the slaveholder had more personal contact with his Negroes and came to understand their weaknesses and infirmities. Except in the cotton counties, few owners employed overseers. A typical farmer worked side by side with his blacks in fields of corn, cotton, and tobacco, and supervised their labor himself. Harrod C. Anderson of Haywood County rolled logs, built fences and did other farm work along with his Negroes, as did hundreds of others. James Stirling, an English traveler who toured the Southern states in the mid-1850's, observed that not infrequently slaves lived with the master's family. He noted that blacks worked in the fields with their owners, took an interest in their affairs, and became "objects of ... [their] regard."²⁵

Many owners told of their regard for their slaves in the public records, and the recorded wills are filled with such examples. If the slaves were old or had performed some meritorious service, owners frequently would emancipate them (so long as state law permitted) and otherwise provide for their well-being. Elias W. Napier, Middle Tennessee planter and iron producer, gave the "negro man Ephraim" his freedom "in consequence of his faithfulness, honesty, and industry in attending to ... [Napier's] business. . . ." Ephraim also received Napier's "best wagon" and eight mules and gear. William Dickson and John Humphries were especially concerned about their old slaves. Dickson provided that his "old Negro fellow called Harry" should have the choice of deciding with which of his (Dickson's) sons he should live his remaining days. Humphries, a justice of the peace, provided that his "old woman Amy . . . is to be permitted to live with which of my children she pleases but not as a slave, and which ever she chooses to live with shall be bound to maintain her as long as she lives but she shall be compelled to live with some of them." William Garrett sold his slaves, but gave them the right to select their own masters, even though a higher price could have been gained by disposing of them otherwise. Joab Hardin's will, probated in 1852, provided that five of his slaves were to be hired out for the benefit of his minor daughter, not indiscriminately, but "to humane and just persons," although in doing so she "may receive a smaller amount of hire." The executor was commanded to resume possession of any slave who was mistreated. All Negroes over twenty-one years of age, Hardin wrote, were to be given small sums of money annually. William L. Lambert of Haywood County wanted his slaves "kept together," and James Currin of Fayette County gave his "old woman Ditty" the right to "select from among . . . [his] children such one as she may wish to live with and the one so selected is to . . . receive . . . thirty dollars to be used in supporting comfortably said old Negro woman." George R. Witt of Fayette County admonished his wife to set aside money each year "for clothing, schooling, and taking care of little George and his negroes that are two [*sic*] small to hire. . . ."²⁶

In many cases blacks were buried alongside whites in private cemeteries. Andrew Jackson's body servant, Alf, was buried at the Hermitage close to the body of his master. The old Nashville Cemetery, located on Fourth Avenue South, was a burial place for both blacks and whites. By 1860 over 7,000 whites and nearly 4,000 Negroes had been interred there. Colonel James Tubb of DeKalb County requested that his body servant, Caleb, be buried next to him. Caleb lived until after the war, and Tubb's son carried out his father's request. Samuel Henderson recorded in his journal in 1857 that his "Old Man Tom, so well and favorably known in this community," had died. Henderson described him as "a more faithful and constant Christian either white or black I have seldom known. He lived like a Christian and he died like he lived." Just after the war, John Houston Bills' old servant, Sam, died, and Bills buried him in the family cemetery beside the body of Bills' only son. He recorded in his diary:

My good old Servant Sam Bills who had been with me more than thirty years, died at 9 P. M., of old age—he was a faithful Honest man, refused to leave me when free, and was true to my interest during the war of the rebellion—peace to his ashes.²⁷

Negroes invariably were not required to work on Saturday afternoons and Sundays and were given many holidays during the year. Saturday was a time for recreation, and Sunday was spent in recreation and worship. Holidays were times for merrymaking, and owners sometimes supplied their slaves with small quantities of whiskey.²⁸

Farmers without skilled slaves frequently hired Negroes from owners. Iron manufacturers during busy seasons depended upon hired slaves from neighborhood masters to enable them to produce at maximum capacity. Hiring was beneficial to both parties, since the person hiring would not have to maintain a full corps of slaves at all times, and owners during lax periods could have their Negroes employed in remunerative work. The price paid for hired blacks varied with the use made of the slave, the supply and demand of labor, and the price of goods which the Negro helped produce. An unskilled worker would earn no more than \$80 to \$100 per year, in addition to the necessities of life provided by the employer. The iron-mongers of Middle Tennessee occasionally paid as high as \$200 per year for skilled workers, and a blacksmith belonging to Samuel P. Polk earned \$487.76 for his master in 1852.

It was generally understood that those hiring slaves would provide them with food, clothing, and bedding. In 1839, when William Corlew hired out several slaves, he stipulated that the renters were "to furnish . . . [the blacks] one summer and two winter suits of clothes, one wool hat and blanket." Middle Tennessee Negroes looked forward to being hired by operators of the iron furnaces. While the work there was harder, the provisions were better. Furnace operators usually supplied all workers with two or three suits of clothing, a hat, a pair of shoes, and a blanket.

Teamsters working during the winter months were also given overcoats. A weekly ration supplied by the furnace men often consisted of seven pounds of pork, a peck of meal, and a quantity of molasses. This was more than some Negroes could consume, and they were permitted to trade part of their rations to whites living in the communities for produce of various sorts.³⁰

House servants, skilled workers, and common laborers, all, were in demand. In 1807 Thomas Overton advertised in a Nashville paper that he had "Negroes of several descriptions, to hire . . .," and in the same year R. and B. B. Winn sought to employ a Negro woman for seven months who must be "well recommended" and "acquainted with house business." Sometime later, Montgomery Bell advertised that he wished "to hire eight or ten negro fellows by the year" for which he promised to give a "generous price."³¹

Hiring out slaves sometimes had its problems for both parties to a contract. The person renting the slaves gave bond and security for the Negroes. If the slaves became sick or ran away, the hirer was still under a legal duty to perform his part of the contract (unless the document contained a provision to the contrary), even if the misfortune occurred on the day of the hiring. State Representative John Eubank no doubt had this in mind when he wrote the owner from whom he had hired a slave: "I think you had better Take him in hand your Self as I think from his conduct [*sic*] that he does not want to Life [*sic*] with me. . . ." In 1839 William Corlew was forced to sue operators of the Jackson Iron Works on Yellow Creek for money due him from having furnished the concern with slave labor, and in the following year Richard Napier brought suit against George F. Napier to recover \$51 "for the hire of Negro Man Jim. . . ."³²

Federal census records prove inadequate in determining the number of slaves hired in any given year. It is apparent, however, that the hiring was done in industrial areas to a greater extent than in counties without industry, and that the practice began at a very early date and continued throughout the slaveholding period.

Tennessee was well situated to be a slave trading state, and from the early 1800's ample records appear of slave traffic. Of course, many planters bought and sold slaves, and administrators of estates, although not considered slavetraders, sold Negroes to settle estates. Although profits were substantial, a moral stigma was associated with slave dealing which no doubt deterred some from engaging in the business. Nevertheless, John Overton, Isaac Bolton, Nathan Bedford Forrest, John Armfield, and Isaac Franklin were only a few engaged in the trade. Overton bought and sold slaves before 1800 in Middle Tennessee, and Bolton and Forrest were two who made fortunes from the traffic in Memphis. Armfield joined Franklin in Sumner County in 1824, and they were highly successful on the Natchez Trace and throughout the South. Frederick Bancroft described Armfield and Franklin as men who had "a positive genius for speculating in slaves."³³

A state law passed in 1812 prohibited the importation of slaves for the purpose of selling them. The statute had a time limitation, and in 1826 another law was



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—Mule Sale

enacted prohibiting the interstate slave trade. The statute was easily circumvented, however, and it appears that little effort was made to enforce it.³⁴

Nashville and Memphis were the slavetrading centers of the state, but Memphis, because of its strategic location from the standpoint of accessibility to the lower South, soon outstripped the state's capital as a city of Negro dealings, and became the largest slave trading city in the central South. E. S. Hawkins and Will Boyd, Jr. were two well known Nashville dealers. Their trades were small when compared with those of Forrest and others of Memphis, but their advertisements indicate that they had steady sales. In 1859 Hawkins announced that he had cooks, washers, ironers, good field hands, house servants, and "three families of negroes" which he wished to sell to "good homes." He further stipulated that his operations were not confined to Nashville alone, but that he sought sales in "adjoining counties." Isaac Bolton was the dean of the slave traders in Memphis until displaced in the 1850's by Forrest. Like Hawkins, he offered slaves with a variety of skills, frequently advertising that he had cooks, washers, ironers, plow boys, and men

with other skills. Bolton had numerous brothers, who, with a man named Dickens, formed Bolton, Dickens and Company. Until a feud developed they called themselves, with some exaggeration, "the most extensive Negro traders in the world." By the early 1850's Nathan Bedford Forrest, who later as "the wizard of the saddle" was to exhibit his true genius and courage, had graduated from horse swapping to slave trading, and replaced the Boltons as the leading trader of Memphis.³⁵

The prices of slaves depended upon many factors, including the age, quality, and skill of the Negroes. Over the state the average value of slaves in 1790 was from \$150 to \$200, but the price climbed substantially after that. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 and the closing of the African slave trade in 1808 were material factors causing the increase. Except for a brief dip in prices during the late 1830's and the mid-1840's, the average price for the state as a whole rose steadily to 1860. The following table indicates the value for the two decades before the war:³⁶

<i>Year</i>	<i>Average Value</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Average Value</i>
1836	\$584	1848	\$467.44
1838	540	1850	506.93
1840	543	1852	547.26
1842	509	1854	605.52
1844	420	1856	689
1846	413.72	1859	854.64

The highest valuation is found in the cotton country of West Tennessee. In 1838, for example, the average value in Haywood County was placed at \$634, while that for Davidson and Rutherford (in Middle Tennessee) was \$578 and \$598 respectively, and for Johnson County (in East Tennessee) was only \$368.³⁷

Apparently most owners in selling slaves tried to keep families—or at least mothers and children—together. Henry Leek provided in his will (1832) that his Negroes should be sold at his death, but that "those not over 10 [are] to be sold with their mothers." Some years later Joab Hardin was careful to will a mother and infant daughter to his own daughter, but provided for the sale of male slaves. In 1856 a Memphis dealer advertised that he had nine "stoutest, and healthiest Negroes ever offered for sale," but that they had been "raised" together on a West Tennessee farm and could not be separated. A Nashville dealer in 1859 advertised "three families of negroes," and in the same year in Lebanon the following were sold at auction: "Hannah, 19, and sucking child"; "Harriet, 19, and a little child"; and "Paralee, 22, and two small children."³⁸

Negroes sometimes were stolen and others ran away. John A. Murrell, one of the most notorious thieves in Tennessee history, had been branded HT (for horse thief) before turning his hand to the more profitable venture of stealing slaves. In some cases, Murrell would sell, steal, and resell the same slave several times. Not infrequently slaveowners would advertise for the return of slaves whom they believed to have been stolen. In 1858 Thomas W. Preston, of Memphis, offered a

\$20 reward for the return of his fourteen year old slave girl, Grissey, but offered \$25 also for the apprehension of "any white person or free person of color" who concealed and harbored her. Some years earlier the editor of a Bolivar paper told of a "heart-rending act of villainy" committed by two white men, who took "violently from the arms of their mother" three small children living in Fayette County. A "handsome reward" was offered for the apprehension of the men, who were believed to be making their way into Missouri.³⁹

More owners had difficulty with runaways than with thefts, and the problem became increasingly acute year after year. As will be observed in a later chapter, the fugitive slave law of 1850 was not effective, and increasingly large numbers of slaves left their masters during the 1850's. It was one of the many risks which a slave purchaser had to assume when he acquired Negroes.

Montgomery Bell, a ruthless slavedriver who stripped Tennessee soil of its fertility and minerals but who also was one of the state's greatest exploiters of iron ore, advertised frequently for runaway slaves. In 1807 he sought "Billey," who had given trouble before, and offered a reward of \$200 for his safe return. Bell described him as a man whose countenance showed "discontent, unless when he affects a smile," and who "was guilty of crimes previous to his elopement." Any person apprehending him was commanded to "iron him in the most secure manner, paying no regard to any promises he may make," lodge him in jail, and inform Bell. By 1845 Bell, in advanced age and in enfeebled condition, still had difficulty with runaway slaves. In that year he announced that "two low white women" had seduced and taken away two of his best slaves—an engineer called Tom and a blacksmith named Jim—and that he would give a substantial reward for the return of the Negroes.⁴⁰

Many others advertised not infrequently for runaways, and some offered sizable rewards. Nathan Bedford Forrest offered in 1856 \$300 for the return of a carpenter who had escaped. According to Forrest, the Negro was skilled and well trained, and could read and write. William B. Robertson offered a substantial reward in 1820 for "Clem," whom he described as being over six feet tall and who had never been "thrown down by black or white and seldom beat at running or jumping." A reward of \$300 was offered for Clem if apprehended "west" of the Ohio River, half the amount if "East" of the river, and \$100 if caught while still in Tennessee. "Old Yaller," a Negro owned by a DeKalb Countian, was a frequent absconder, who usually could be located in the company of one of Colonel James Tubb's females, by whom he had ten or twelve children.⁴¹

Runaway slaves from states of the deep South not infrequently were apprehended in Tennessee. The appearance of one in Charlotte in September, 1814, created excitement in the small town. The Negro appeared in the community half naked, wearing large blue beads about his neck, and carrying a huge clubaxe in his hands. Sheriff Joseph Wingate immediately took him into custody and found that he could speak very few words of English. The sheriff placed him in the county

jail and advertised in the Nashville *Whig* for the owner to hasten to Charlotte and take away the menacing black. Several years later a runaway from Natchez, Mississippi, appeared in Charlotte. The Negro was apprehended but escaped again before his owner could come for him. In September, 1845, the Shelby County jail was crowded with runaways. Several were from Tipton, Shelby, and other counties of southwestern Tennessee, but at least three were from Mississippi. Runaway slaves from all of the Southern states, but particularly Mississippi and Arkansas, often would be caught in Memphis.⁴²

Negroes ran away for many reasons, but perhaps the most prevalent one was from fear of punishment. Bell wrote in 1807 that his runaway, "Billey," feared punishment, and John Eubank in 1846 wrote that a slave "boy Jack" had fled because he feared that Eubank "would flog him." No doubt the underground railroad and the malicious propaganda of the abolitionists also took their toll.⁴³

Tennessee whites took a paternalistic attitude toward the Negroes and made them frequent subjects for legislative enactment. The slaves occupied a peculiar position in the legal framework of the state, inasmuch as they were considered both chattels and persons before the civil and common law. As a chattel a Negro slave was personal property. He could not own property, had no political privileges, was subject to sale just as any other piece of property, and was subject to the control of his master at all times. As was held in 1835 in the case of *Wright vs. Weatherly*, "all his personal rights as a citizen and his liabilities as such, are destroyed and merged in the ownership of the master, who controls his person, owns his property, and is entitled to the fruits of his labor." But he also had personal rights, and he was held responsible for murder, rape, and a variety of other offenses. The supreme court explained this two-fold status in 1839 in these words:

Under our modified system of slavery, slaves are not mere chattels, but are regarded in the twofold character of persons and property. That as persons they are considered by our law, as accountable moral agents, possessed by the power of volition and locomotion. That certain rights have been conferred upon them by positive law and judicial determination, and other privileges and indulgences have been conceded to them by universal consent of their owners.⁴⁴

In one case the supreme court drew a parallel between a master and slave, and a father and child. The master was bound by law to clothe and care for the slave properly. He could chastise him, but severe punishment was illegal. He, in turn, could expect from the slave work according to his capabilities.⁴⁵

Fugitives posed a major problem for the slaveowners, who in every Southern state devised a system to recapture them. Before Tennessee became a state, North Carolina had provided for "searchers," or "patrols," whose duties included searching slave quarters periodically for weapons and returning runaway slaves to their rightful owners. The "patterollers," as the Negroes called them, apparently were

reasonably effective, and the system was used throughout the slaveholding period. In 1806 captains of the militia companies were given the responsibility of supervising and appointing members of the patrol. Some authority was given patrollers. They were authorized to search any suspicious slave and to examine all slave quarters. A Negro not on his master's property could be searched for a "pass" signed by his owner. If the slave had no "pass" the patroller could chastise him with not more than fifteen lashes and commit him to jail until the owner could be located. Slaves forging passes were to be whipped with not more than thirty-nine stripes.⁴⁶

Although some masters gave whiskey to slaves on special occasions, the fiery liquid in Negro hands often created serious problems. State legislators gave attention to the matter soon after the turn of the eighteenth century. A slave could not sell whiskey without permission of his master, and could be jailed and whipped if he did anyway. For selling liquor to slaves a free Negro could be fined \$50, and a white person was subjected to both fine and imprisonment.⁴⁷

Free Negroes constituted a problem which could not be solved entirely by legislation. Though never large in number, they were considered by whites to be shiftless, depraved, and dangerous to the maintenance of a satisfactory relationship between slave and master. They tended to concentrate in Memphis, Nashville, and Knoxville, but a few were found in most of the Tennessee counties. Until 1835 Tennessee was looked upon as the most lenient state of all toward the free Negro, probably because under the constitution of 1796 they had been permitted to vote. During the first three decades of the nineteenth century the free colored population increased from 309 to 4,555. During the next decade the growth was not quite so rapid, for in 1860 the class numbered 7,300.⁴⁸

The free Negro came from several sources, including immigration, emancipation, self-purchase, and natural increase from free women. As mentioned, free Negroes came into Tennessee frequently in hopes of bettering their economic and political status. Freedom of residence was withdrawn in 1831, but in 1842 the right of entry into the state was restored if the court of the county where the Negro expected to reside would give bond guaranteeing his good behavior. Slaves would be emancipated by their masters occasionally, often for meritorious service. Self-purchase was actually another form of emancipation. Some masters permitted the Negro to earn money and apply it against his purchase price. Most blacks in this category were intelligent and were skilled mechanics or craftsmen.⁴⁹

Free Negroes were kept under surveillance throughout the period. In 1806 a statute was enacted providing for the registration and numbering of each free black or mulatto. His age, name, "color," "any apparent mark or scar," and an explanation of how and why he was free, were recorded. Later, laws were enacted to combat vagrancy, to use free Negroes in the maintenance of the roads, and to hire them out if convicted of disorderly conduct.⁵⁰

After 1831 it became increasingly apparent that the free Negro was not wanted by Tennessee whites. As mentioned, blacks of this class were prohibited from

coming into the state in 1831, and two years later legislators voted to pay to the African Colonization Society ten dollars for every free Negro transported from the state. In the constitutional convention of 1834 the privilege of voting was taken from them. For the next twenty-five years more restrictive legislation was passed. In 1858 free Negroes were permitted to enter slavery if they desired, and in the following year a measure was proposed which sought the removal to Africa or the forceable enslavement of all free blacks under forty-five years of age.⁵¹

It is quite possible that free Negroes were berated much more than they deserved, but no one can deny that their lot was a hard one. Most were in poverty, or on the verge of it, and they received little encouragement from whites. Acts of raucous trouble makers usually were heralded in the press, but seldom did the good works of the less pugnacious ones get into print. Many no doubt were shiftless, and all pursued whatever jobs they could find. In 1804 "Black Bob" ran a Nashville tavern, and some years later John Brown and Joseph Clauston were Memphis barbers. Many worked as cooks, domestic servants, stonemasons and bricklayers, carpenters, and painters, but the vast majority were farm laborers. Published comments were usually not complimentary. In the case of *Fisher's Negroes vs. Dabbs*, Justice John Catron wrote that the "free black lives among us without motive and without hope. . . . Degraded by their color and condition in life . . . [they] are a very dangerous and most objectionable population. . . ." Senator Spencer Jarnigan said in 1833 that their association with low whites was "disgusting and a curse to the country," while their contact with slaves "was corrupting the slave population." Senator E. B. Littlefield called them "a curse to society," and described them as people who were "too lazy to work, and in general get their living by dishonest means."⁵²

Ante Bellum Industry—Whenever the economy of ante bellum Tennessee was discussed, generally the speakers agreed that industry should be secondary to agriculture. More social and economic prestige was associated with the tillers of the soil than with mechanics and laborers, and those who advocated industrial development lured few of the Tennessee yeomen from the hills and valleys to accept the dubious advantages of steady work and pay in factories. A disgruntled Jackson mechanic wrote in 1856 of his disgust for the low esteem in which men of his class were held. He believed that lack of status led mechanics to desert their calling and that it permanently damaged the chance for industrial growth in the state.⁵³

Despite this attitude some industrial development did take place, principally in iron manufacture. James King's Iron Works had been built at the mouth of Steele's Creek in Sullivan County in the early 1780's, and James Robertson established Cumberland Iron Works in Middle Tennessee about ten years later. Montgomery Bell purchased the Cumberland furnace in 1804, and became one of the state's greatest industrialists of the period. Four years after his purchase his advertisement for 5,000 cords of wood was indicative of his operations. At one time Bell owned or had an interest in over a dozen Middle Tennessee furnaces and forges. Other

furnaces were opened from time to time, especially in Washington, Unicoi, Greene, Hickman, Montgomery, Stewart, and Lewis counties. In 1850 the Chattanooga Foundry and Machine Shop was established in the Hamilton County seat which after Reconstruction was to exhibit dynamic growth in iron and steel. Ten years later the Vulcan Iron Works was opened in the same town. By 1860 Tennessee ranked third in bloomery output, excelled only by Pennsylvania and New York. The Civil War brought renewed interest in the lead mines of East Tennessee, and in late 1860 considerable interest was being shown in the Bumpas Cove area which had been productive earlier.⁵⁴

Despite the advance in iron manufacture, little interest was shown in textiles. Samuel C. Williams, who uncovered many Tennessee "firsts," wrote some years ago of "the South's first cotton factory," established near Nashville in the early 1790's by John Hague. Whatever else Hague was able to do with his "cotton factory," he, unfortunately, interested few contemporaries in his venture. Tennessee pioneers made their clothing in their own households, and, according to one authority, nine-tenths of the people of the state wore homespun as late as 1865.⁵⁵

Efforts were made occasionally during the two decades before the war to arouse interest in industry. A joint select committee, appointed by state legislators in 1845, studied manufacturing possibilities. The members concluded that "few if any States in the Union transcend Tennessee in the natural advantages for manufacturing." They believed that slaves could be used in industry and pointed to the success of Patton, Donegan and Company of Madison County, Alabama, who used slaves almost exclusively "in every department" in the manufacture of both woolen and cotton goods. Mark R. Cockrill, mentioned earlier as a Davidson County sheep raiser and breeder of fine stock, urged the establishment of cotton mills. Cockrill believed that every Tennessee county could have at least one or two mills, which, he said, would "render the South magnificently rich, and gloriously independent. . . ." He visualized fifteen planters, each investing four thousand dollars, in cotton growing counties. This would be sufficient to begin the project, after which additional stock would be sold to friends and neighbors in the vicinity of the plant. During the 1850's more interest was shown than in the previous decade. James D. B. De Bow in 1850 pointed to the economic advantages of Memphis, which he believed was one of the best manufacturing locations in the Union and could eclipse Lowell, Massachusetts, in cotton milling. E. Steadman, superintendent of the Sumner Manufacturing Company of Gallatin, was an active cotton mill publicist. He published *The Southern Manufacturer* at Gallatin and also not infrequently issued tracts and pamphlets in which he urged Tennesseans in particular and Southerners in general to give more attention to manufactures.⁵⁶

By 1860 little progress had been made in manufacturing. Although factories had been established in at least Knoxville, Paris, Athens, Gallatin, Nashville, Murfreesboro, and Franklin, the state's output was small. Less than \$700,000 worth of manufactured goods were produced in that year, but nearby Georgia made goods

valued at \$2,371,207, and Massachusetts at over \$38,000,000. Wool manufacture was pursued scarcely at all in Tennessee. Only one small factory was in operation in 1860, and the state's total output in that year was worth only \$8,100. Virginia's output, however, was valued at \$717,827, Georgia's at \$464,420, and North Carolina's at \$291,000.⁵⁷

Coal and copper mining were carried on extensively in East Tennessee at mid-century. Coal seams were tapped in the 1840's, but the widespread use of charcoal meant little use for coal except for blacksmithing. During the 1850's, however, New York capitalists established the Sewanee Mining Company (the forerunner of the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company) which exploited the rich coal veins of East Tennessee. Copper, next to iron, was the most useful metal to the pioneers, and was first discovered in Tennessee in 1843 when a miner mistook it for gold. During the 1850's large quantities were taken from Polk County. The Hiwassee mine was opened in August, 1850, and by 1854 at least fourteen mines produced several million pounds of copper annually and sold it in the markets of London, New York, and Boston.⁵⁸

The weakness of ante bellum industry in the state resulted from lack of interest. Politicians, realizing that major political decisions lay with the farmers, seldom advocated industrial progress. European immigrants from industrial centers seldom came South, and nativists like William G. Brownlow urged them to settle in the North rather than to come to Tennessee. The mad scramble for industry, which came later in most of the Southern states, was not present in Tennessee until after the war.⁵⁹

Towns and Cities—There were no urban communities at mid-century which could be classified as "cities" in the modern sense of the term. The state's capital, a sprawling town on the banks of the Cumberland River, was the largest in the state and was primarily an agricultural and commercial center. Its population of 10,165 pursued a variety of occupations, including flour- and sawmilling, and other small manufactures. By 1850 fifteen toll roads radiated from Nashville, making it "the hub of a system of the finest highways in the world." The Nashville and Chattanooga Railway was nearly completed, and the first steam locomotive began operation in 1851.⁶⁰

Memphis, with a population of 8,841, was the next largest city in 1850. It was incorporated in 1826 and grew rapidly. The census of 1830 indicated a population of only a few hundred, but ten years later, nearly two thousand persons had settled in Memphis. By 1860 the population had increased nearly three times the figure of 1850. The River Town immediately became a cotton center. At mid-century factors were handling 150,000 bales valued at \$7,520,000. Ten years later the figures were tripled. The river traffic, coupled with the promise of increased trade with the completion of railroad construction, caused a New Orleans editor in 1850 to predict that Memphis soon would be "the most important town in the Southwest after New

Orleans." The River Town was a child of cotton and the Mississippi, and most occupations were connected directly or indirectly with cotton and river trade.⁶¹

Knoxville had a population of 2,076 at mid-century. It was the oldest of the four major towns, and retained the lead in the cultural and commercial life of East Tennessee. During the early period it became a financial center, the Bank of the State of Tennessee being established there in 1811, and continued as a town of strong financial interests throughout the ante bellum period. Steamboat transportation caused Knoxville to experience growth during the 1820's, and the opening of rail facilities during the 1850's brought further expansion. The town was the center of various educational establishments, as discussed in another chapter. As in Nashville, flour- and sawmilling were the chief industries.⁶²

Chattanooga was not incorporated until 1839, and at mid-century its population numbered only a few hundred families. Earlier it has been a stopping place for river traffic, and was known as "Ross's Landing." In 1850 the Western and Atlantic Railroad, which reached northward from Atlanta to Chattanooga and extended to Charleston, South Carolina, began operation. A decade later Chattanooga was a focal point of all of the railroads in the Southeast. It was not until after the war that the town began a great period of growth, and not until 1870 that it became the county seat of Hamilton County.⁶³

At mid-century other towns in all sections of the state were growing rapidly, and several had population figures in excess of those claimed by Knoxvillians and Chattanoogaans. Columbia, established in the first decade of the nineteenth century and which became the county seat of Maury County, had a population in 1850 of 2,977. Murfreesboro, county seat of Rutherford County, had 1,917 people, and Lebanon, county seat of Wilson County, had 1,554 people. Pulaski, the Giles County seat, had 1,137, and Franklin, county seat of Williamson County, had a population of 891. In West Tennessee, Jackson, with a population of 1,006, and Brownsville with 971 people, ranked just behind Memphis. The population movement into Middle and West Tennessee—to say nothing of Arkansas and Texas—kept the towns in the eastern division small. As mentioned, Knoxville had about two thousand persons. Greeneville had only 660, and Kingsport had 320 people.⁶⁴

Ante Bellum Society—The picture of Southern society as created by ante bellum writers and travelers from the North became a stereotype widely accepted for many years. It was one of a three-fold class society consisting of the lazy but well-to-do mint julip-drinking planter at the top; the equally lazy but more degenerate, shiftless, and hopeless poor white—"that lawless and idle rabble"—at the bottom of the social ladder; and the worthy, but imposed-upon slave composing the "mud sill" on which the whole structure was built. Those at the top were arrogant; those at the bottom, surly. It was not until comparatively recently that the distinguished historian, Frank L. Owsley, and others working with him at Vanderbilt University, produced a preponderance of evidence of a strong middle class. The



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Shelbyville—Owner attracting colt with paper bag containing pebbles,
Tennessee Walking Horse Show*

absence of a middle, or “yeoman,” class was disproved and an accurate picture of the social structure was presented. Owsley and others have shown that the planter class, the poor white, and the slave groups were actually in the minority; the great majority of Southern people were middle class farmers. The yeoman farmer seldom was a large slaveholder. He wrote no books and few held high political offices, but his class composed the backbone of the social and economic structure of the South.⁶⁵

As middle class people, the yeomen enjoyed middle class pleasures. The house raisings, corn huskings, and quilting parties did not expire with the early pioneers but continued through the ante bellum days. After a log rolling or house raising invariably came an all-night dance and frolic. By the light of the moon or the burning embers—or even with no light at all—the “Virginia Reel” and the “Kentucky Hoe-down” would be executed with such fervor that people from miles around came to observe, to participate, and to visit.⁶⁶

Horseracing and cockfighting were two sports enjoyed by some people. Most

Tennesseans had at least heard of Jackson's horse, Truxton. William B. Stokes of DeKalb County owned one called "Ariel," which, if less renowned than Truxton, probably won as many races. The Reverend H. M. Cryer, a Sumner County preacher, owned a half-interest in a stallion, and, despite continued discouragement from his irate (and probably jealous) parishioners, he continued to pit his horse against others in the neighborhood. Cockfighting did not enjoy the popularity horseracing did but was engaged in casually by the more audacious class of gamblers.⁶⁷

Whiskey drinking and fist fights usually accompanied gatherings of all kinds—even preaching services—if Peter Cartwright's exaggerated and boastful *Autobiography* can be believed. Fights usually began as wrestling or boxing matches, but if blood did not flow quickly enough to suit the more sanguine onlookers, some would insist that the fight continue only with "no holds barred." At this point the "friendly fight" became a gory struggle in which gouging, kicking, biting, and clawing would take place. James Flint, the Scotch traveler, was nauseated by what he beheld. He wrote:

Fights are characterized by the most savage ferocity. Gouging or putting out the antagonist's eyes by thrusting the thumbs into the sockets, is a part of the *modus operandi* . . . kicking and biting are also means used in combat; I have seen . . . several noses and ears which have been mutilated by this canine mode of fighting.⁶⁸

Spectators, "rooting" for one or the other, sometimes would become embroiled. In 1816, at Elkton, the champion of the Price family fought the best man of the McKinnys. Even as the principals, James Price and James McKinney, squared off, half the crowd stripped to fight, and for several hours the hills and valleys of the small Giles County community echoed with the sounds of the fierce struggle. Whiskey seldom sold for more than fifty cents a gallon and was consumed by the frontiersmen in large quantities. Abner Ponder sold excellent whiskey in Centerville, but Nashville's was widely hailed as the best in the state. In DeKalb County one farmer purchased on credit thirteen gallons of whiskey and brandy within a few months' time. He paid 37½¢ per gallon for whiskey and 40¢ for brandy. Later, when a Memphis tavern offered a popular brand for 25¢ a gallon, many Memphians vowed they would never taste water while good whiskey sold at that price.⁶⁹

While the rural people continued their frontier mode of life throughout the ante bellum period, people in the cities—particularly Nashville—by the 1840's had attained a degree of social maturity and exhibited more sophistication than did their rural neighbors. Although in a Nashville church service the distinguished Doctor Philip Lindsley, in resuming his seat after having stood for prayer, might find that a tobacco-chewing parishioner in the meantime had used his pew for a cuspidor, such a situation should not stigmatize ante bellum Nashville. The capital city became the center of the state's artistic and musical life during the three decades

preceding the war, and was favorably known wherever science, music, drama, and literature were cultivated.⁷⁰

Many artists came to Nashville during the period. People had the opportunity to hear the compositions of Haydn, Handel, and Mozart in formal recital (probably for the first time) in 1830, when a husband and wife named Pearman visited this country from London and performed in Nashville. They organized an orchestra of local talent, consisting of both "professionals and amateurs," and presented selections from Haydn's oratorio, *The Creation*, and from Handel's *Messiah*. Jenny Lind visited Nashville during the 1850's, and Charlotte Cushman ("the only great American actress of the nineteenth century") and Edwin Booth thrilled audiences with their stage performances in the same decade.⁷¹

Perhaps the three outstanding events of the period were the two performances of Jenny Lind in 1851, the presentations of Signor Luigi Arditi's Italian Opera Company in 1854, and the performances of Edwin Booth in 1859.

The announcement of Miss Lind's expected appearance sent "the whole town" into "one wild uproar," and when she arrived on March 29, curious children and eager adults lined the river docks to catch a glimpse of her. On the following day the editor of the *Nashville American* apologized profusely for not being able to carry out his plans of publishing a large picture of Miss Lind, but he did devote one-half of the front page to a sketch of her career. Tickets for the first performance sold as high as \$200 each, and standing room was considered cheap at \$3.00. From the presentation of her first selection, an aria from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, to her closing rendition of *Home, Sweet Home*, the Swedish Nightingale charmed her audience and held them spellbound. The editor of the *Nashville American* thought that her *Bird Song* was like "the most wonderful mocking bird which ever sang," and he "marvelled that such a voice could belong to a human [being]." Her two performances were held in the new Adelphi Theater, which had been constructed the year before at a cost of \$25,000 and was said to have had "the second largest stage" of all theaters in the country.⁷²

The first full operatic production was presented in Nashville in 1854 by the Italian Opera Company, with Arditi as director and Madame Rosa DeVries as prima donna. *Lucia di Lammermoor* apparently was a favorite with Nashville audiences, and Arditi presented Donizetti's moving composition on opening night. On succeeding evenings he presented Donizetti's *Lucretia Borgia*, Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, Bellini's *Norma* and *La Sonnambula*, and Verdi's *Ernani*. Although DeVries could not reach the high notes of Jenny Lind, many believed she was a greater artist. Her warm interpretation of the romantic *Norma* sent her audience into rapture and permitted her to retire only "under a perfect deluge of bouquets." Nashvillians did not understand opera as they did the simple charm and beauty of Jenny Lind, and consequently the audiences were smaller, but the Nashville press termed the operatic performance "a success."⁷³

The twenty-six-year-old stage sensation, Edwin Booth, began his engage-

ment in the capital city in March, 1859, and was billed as "the distinguished young tragedian." A man of melancholy and romantic countenance, graceful carriage, and poetic temperament, who nature had cast as a nineteenth century Hamlet, Booth for two weeks interpreted Shakespeare for audiences which filled the Gaiety (a new name for the Adelphi) to capacity. He probably was the most polished Hamlet Nashville audiences had seen, but played Macbeth equally well.⁷⁴

Memphis, being a frontier river town of not more than 4,000 people in 1845, could not compete with Nashville as a cultural center, but did present many cultural features. During the 1850's both Jenny Lind and Edwin Booth performed for Memphis audiences. Ole Bull,* a self-taught violin virtuoso from Norway who attempted to play music which would appeal to people from all walks of life, appeared before a capacity crowd of 400 in Concert Hall in 1845. Eight years later he returned to Memphis, which by that time had doubled its population over what it had at the time of Bull's first visit. Again he played to capacity crowds who paid two dollars for reserved seats. The appearance of the Swedish Nightingale in 1851 caused the same sensation in Memphis as in Nashville. A capacity crowd paid five dollars each to hear her, even though the performance was at eleven o'clock in the morning.⁷⁵

Among others who appeared on the Memphis stage during the period were Boston-born soprano Signora Elisa Biscaccianti, a baritone named Signor Belletti, and Joseph Burke, a violinist. The decade of the 1850's was one of minstrelsy in Memphis, and a half dozen groups—including Christy's Minstrels—gave public performances.⁷⁶

The smaller town of Knoxville also became acquainted with minstrelsy; for example, Parrow's "Sable Minstrels," a noted Negro group, performed there in 1849. Although Knoxville was not visited by Jenny Lind or Edwin Booth, its citizens had the opportunity to hear the Swiss Bell Ringers in 1854, a Mr. Worms, a violinist from New Orleans, in 1855 and 1856, and a blind flutist by the name of Gorenflo in 1857. The next year the singer, Anna Vail, visited Knoxville on her farewell concert tour before returning to Europe. She was assisted in her concert by the great violinist Mollenhauer and by Theodore Schreiner, a talented pianist and composer. Especially notable in Knoxville was the prevalence of home-talent productions in music and drama, with private teachers and the faculties of East Tennessee University and East Tennessee Female Institute providing the leadership.⁷⁷

At mid-century Tennesseans could point to much development during the half century of statehood. The people still were predominantly rural, but much progress had been made in agriculture and some in industry. Culturally, many of the frontier vices and pleasures remained, but the cities showed tendencies toward real cultural development.

* Ole Bull and the child prodigy, Adelina Patti, gave a series of concerts before Nashville audiences in April, 1853.

CHAPTER XXII—NOTES

1. Constantine G. Belissary, "Industry and Industrial Philosophy in Tennessee, 1850-1860," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 23 (1951), 46; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 92; *Seventh Census*, Population, 584.
2. Blanche Henry Clarke, *The Tennessee Yeoman, 1840-1860* (Nashville, 1942), 41, 155; Lewis Cecil Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (2 vols., Washington, 1933), II, 882-83ff.; Chase C. Mooney, *Slavery in Tennessee* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1957), 143.
3. Gray, *Agriculture*, II, 884.
4. *Ibid.*, 687; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 147; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 200-201; *Impartial Review and Cumberland Repository* (Nashville), January 3, June 27, 1807; John Wooldridge (ed.), *History of Nashville, Tennessee* (Nashville, 1890), 243-44; Albert C. Holt, *The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1923), 109; *The Agriculturalist*, III (1942), 40.
5. Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 147; Mooney, *Slavery*, 134, 139.
6. Goodspeed, *History of Tennessee*, 239; Mooney, *Slavery*, 134, 139; Emma Inman Williams, "Jackson and Madison County; An Inland Cotton Center of the Growing West, 1821-1850," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III (March, 1944), 35.
7. *Eighth Census*, 1860, Agriculture, xxix ff.; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 121 ff., 158.
8. *Ibid.*, 125; *Nashville Union and American*, December 17, 1854; William Bruce Turner, *History of Maury County, Tennessee* (Nashville, 1955), 72, 246-47.
9. White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 332-33; Address of Tolbert Fanning, in Second Biennial Report of the Tennessee State Agricultural Bureau . . . , *Appendix to House and Senate Journals*, 1857-1858, p. 171.
10. White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 332, 333-34; *House Journal*, 1829, p. 489.
11. *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, February 13, 1829.
12. *Nashville Republican Banner*, January 10, 1842; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 487; *The Agriculturalist*, III (1942), 40.
13. *Senate Journal*, 1841, p. 80; *Public Acts*, 1841, Chap. CLXXVIII, 206-08; Chap. CLXXXII, 213-14; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 487.
14. "Diaries of S. H. Laughlin, of Tennessee, 1840, 1843," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (March, 1916), 73; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 135; *Seventh Census*, 1850, lxxxiii; *Eighth Census*, 1860, Agriculture, 139.
15. *Senate Journal*, 1841, p. 125; *House Journal*, 1841, p. 99; *Western Union*, March 29, 1838, as cited by Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 113, 71.
16. *Ibid.*, 112-13, 117, 123.
17. *Public Acts*, 1841, Chap. CIX, 112-14; White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 486; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 78-79.
18. *Ibid.*, 80; *Public Acts*, 1853-54, Chap. CCLV, 460-69; 1855, Chap. XCV, 105-08.
19. Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 157; Fourth Census, 1820, Dickson County (unpublished), Schedule I; Kate Johnson Peters, *Lauderdale County: From Earliest Times* (Ripley, 1957), 202, 206, 218.
20. James I. Robertson, Jr., "Frolics, Fights, and Firewater in Frontier Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (June, 1958), 101; Frank L. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (University, Louisiana, 1949), 115.
21. Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 157; Peters, *Lauderdale County*, 202, 206, 218; Fourth Census, 1820, Schedule I (unpublished), Dickson, Madison, and Greene counties.
22. *A Century of Population Growth, 1790-1900* (Washington, 1909), 138.

23. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 329; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 150, 156; A. C. Cole, *The Whig Party in the South* (Washington, 1913), map in appendix; *Eighth Census*, 1860, Population, 456-64.
24. W. T. Hale and Dixon Merritt, *A History of Tennessee and Tennesseans* (8 vols., Chicago, 1913), II, 292-93; Lillian R. Maxey, "Historical Study of the Negro in Tennessee, 1796-1868" (M. A. thesis, Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State College, 1948), 3; Caleb Patterson, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865* (Austin, Texas, 1922), 11; *A Century of Growth*, 133.
25. Mooney, *Slavery*, 198-201; James Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States* (London, 1857), 291.
26. County Records, Dickson County Will Book A, 2, 30-31, 93, 194, 258; Fayette County Will Book A, 1836-1854, pp. 153, 165 (WPA copy).
27. Mooney, *Slavery*, 90-91; John Houston Bills' Diary (September 10, 1869), in Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
28. Bell Irvin Wiley, "Cotton and Slavery in the History of West Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, University of Kentucky, 1929), 69-70; Mooney, *Slavery*, 89.
29. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 286; Mooney, *Slavery*, 32; Corlew, *Dickson County*, 76.
30. Minutes, Dickson County Circuit Court (1839-1845), 197-98; Statement by a Captain Mockbee, among William Loch Cook Papers, in private possession.
31. *Impartial Review* . . . , May 24, 1806, December 31, 1807, March 10, 1808.
32. Supreme Court Reports, 4 Tenn. 224 (Hicks vs. Parham); Letter from John Eubank to Joab Hardin, January 8, 1846, among Henry C. Leech Papers, in private possession; Minutes, Dickson County Circuit Court (1839-1845), 197-98, 201.
33. Chase C. Mooney, "Some Institutional and Statistical Aspects of Slavery in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (September, 1942), 200; Isabel Howell, "John Armfield, Slave-trader," *ibid.*, (March, 1943), 3; Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore, 1931), 58.
34. *Public Acts*, 1812, Chap. LXXXV, 109-10; 1826, Chap. XXII, 31-33.
35. Bancroft, *Slave Trading*, 249, 252, 256 ff.; Mooney, *Slavery*, 26-47; Nashville *Daily News*, January 28, 29, February 1, 1859; Capers, *River Town*, 103-04; John Hallum, *Diary of an Old Lawyer* (Nashville, 1895), 76. For comprehensive discussions on slave trading in Tennessee, see Bancroft, *Slave Trading*, Chapter 12, pp. 250-68, and Hallum, *Diary*, unnumbered chapter entitled "Bolton, Dickens and Company, and the Institution of Slavery," 76-79.
36. *Report of the Comptroller of the Treasury of the State of Tennessee to the House of Representatives*, 1836, 1838, 1841, 1843, 1845, 1847, 1849, 1851, 1853, 1855, 1857, 1859.
37. Mooney, *Slavery*, 123; *A Century of Growth*, 133-34. See also Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (New York, 1918), 370-77.
38. Memphis *Daily Appeal*, February 24, 1856, as cited by Mooney, *Slavery*, 51; Nashville *Daily News*, February 1, 1859; County Records, Dickson County Will Book A, 148, 227-28; Mooney, *Slavery*, 37.
39. Memphis *Daily Appeal*, July 13, 1858, as cited in Maxey, "Negro," 17, 19; Samuel C. Williams, *West Tennessee*, 247; Emma Inman Williams, "Jackson and Madison County," 42; Phelan, *History of Tennessee*, 350; Nashville *Republican and State Gazette*, July 5, August 22, 1833.
40. *Impartial Review* August 27, 1807; Nashville *Policician*, August 8, 1845, clipping in Montgomery Bell Papers, in State Library.

41. Mooney, *Slavery*, 54; Nashville *Whig*, August 9, 1820; Will T. Hale, *History of DeKalb County, Tennessee* (Nashville, 1915), 103-04.
42. Nashville *Whig*, September 27, 1814; Nashville *Clarion and Tennessee State Gazette*, September 2, 1817; Mooney, *Slavery*, 54.
43. *Impartial Review* . . . , August 27, 1807; Letter, Eubank to Joab Hardin, January 8, 1846, in Henry C. Leech Papers, in private possession.
44. Tennessee Supreme Court *Reports*, 20 Tenn. 101 (Elijah a Slave *vs.* The State); 15 Tenn. 367 (Wright *vs.* Weatherly); Mooney, *Slavery*, 15; H. M. Henry, "The Slave Laws of Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (September, 1916), 177-78.
45. Tennessee Supreme Court *Reports*, 36 Tenn. 397 (Jane G. James *vs.* Sampson Carper).
46. Henry, "Slave Laws of Tennessee," 179, 181; Mooney, *Slavery*, 11; *Public Acts*, 1806, Chap. XXXII, 135-38.
47. *Public Acts*, 1824, Chap. LVII, 76; 1829, Chap. LXXIV, 102-03; Henry, "Slave Laws in Tennessee," 187-88; Mooney, *Slavery*, 15.
48. J. Merton England, "The Free Negro in Ante-Bellum Tennessee," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (February, 1943), 37. (This article is based on Professor England's extensive research for his superior Vanderbilt doctoral dissertation, with title same as the article.) Henry, "Slave Laws in Tennessee," 200; William L. Imes, "Legal Status of the Negro in Tennessee," *Journal of Negro History*, IV (July, 1919), 261; *Eighth Census*, Population, 461.
49. England, "Free Negro," 38-41; *Public Acts*, 1831, Chap. CII, 121-22; 1841-1842, Chap. CXCI, 229-30.
50. *Ibid.*, 1806, Chap. XXXII, 135-38; 1852, Chap. CLX, 237; 1855, Chap. CXXXI, 328-32.
51. Imes, "Legal Status of Negro," 262; *Public Acts*, 1833, Chap. LXIV, 76-77; *House Journal*, 1859, pp. 456-58; England "The Free Negro," 49-50.
52. *Ibid.*, 52, 55-58; Ramsey, *Annals*, 648; Nashville *Republican Banner*, October 5, 29, 1833; Supreme Court *Reports*, 14 Tenn. 119 (Fisher's Negroes *vs.* Dabbs).
53. Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*, 75; Belissary, "Industrial Philosophy," 46; Herbert Collins, "The Southern Industrial Gospel before 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, XII (August, 1946), 386-402, *passim.*; Letter in *Tennessee Farmer and Mechanic*, I, 281-82.
54. Oliver Taylor, *Historic Sullivan* (Bristol, 1909), 153, lists the date for the establishment of King's Works as 1784. Historians have disputed the date of the furnace in Middle Tennessee. Hale and Merritt state 1794, and Goodspeed's history, "between 1790 and 1795." A. P. Foster, *Counties of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1923), 25, puts the date at 1793, as does W. L. Cook, "Furnaces and Forges," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, IX (October, 1925), 190. Samuel Cole Williams, in "Early Iron Works in the Tennessee Country," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (March, 1947), 44, claims that "there has been no little loose writing" on the subject, catches so distinguished a historian as Thomas P. Abernethy in error, but does not venture a date himself. (Williams describes King's Works as having been established in the 1790's, preceded by David Ross's in 1789. See also *supra*, 225.) J. B. Killebrew, *Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1874), 705, sets the date at 1810. *Impartial Review* . . . , April 7, 1808; Belissary, "Industrial Spirit," 52-53; James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga, Tennessee: Its Economic History in the Years Immediately Following Appomattox," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 15 (1943), 37, 52; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 868.

55. Samuel Cole Williams, "The South's First Cotton Factory," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, V (September, 1946), 212-21; Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States* (3 vols., New York, 1929), I, 439.
56. *House Journal*, 1845, pp. 594-97; Collins, "Southern Industrial Gospel," 390-91, 399; Belissary, "Industrial Philosophy," 53; *De Bow's Review*, VIII (1850), 561; Paul M. Fink, "The Bumpass Cove Mines and Embreeville," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 48, 49, 56, 57.
57. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 870; *Eighth Census*, 1860, Manufactures, xxi, xxxv.
58. James M. Safford, *A Geological Reconnaissance of the State of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1856), 57-67; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 894, 897-98; Belissary, "Industrial Philosophy," 46, 56. For a discussion of copper mining in Polk County, see R. E. Barclay, *Ducktown: Back in Rabt's Time* (Chapel Hill, 1946), particularly Chapters 6-9.
59. Belissary, "Industrial Philosophy," 56.
60. *Seventh Census*, 1850, pp. 574-75; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 769; Davenport, *Cultural Life in Nashville*, *passim*. The cities and towns are discussed incidentally in other chapters. Only a brief statement is made concerning them at mid-century.
61. Capers, *River Town*, *passim*; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 765; *Seventh Census* (1850), 574-75; New Orleans *Crescent*, quoted in Capers, *River Town*, 77.
62. *Ibid.*; William Rule, *Standard History of Knoxville, Tennessee* (Chicago, 1900), *passim*; Rothrock, *French Broad-Holston Country*, 85; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 777.
63. *Seventh Census*, 1850, pp. 574-75; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 771; Livingood, "Chattanooga, Tennessee," 35-36; Charles D. McGuffey, *Standard History of Chattanooga* (Knoxville, 1911), *passim*; Gilbert E. Govan, "Some Sidelights on the History of Chattanooga," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (June, 1947), 148-53.
64. *Seventh Census*, 1850, pp. 574-75; Turner, *Mauiry County*, 42 ff.; Williams, *Historic Madison*, *passim*.
65. Cf. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*; Clarke, *Tennessee Yeoman*; Mooney, *Slavery*; Herbert Weaver, *Mississippi Farmers, 1850-1860* (Nashville, 1945); Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee, 1850-1860," *Journal of Southern History*, VIII (May, 1942), 161-82; "The Economic Basis of Society in the Late Ante-Bellum South," *ibid.*, VI (February, 1940), 24-45.
66. Robertson, "Frolics, Fights and Firewater," 101; Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 114 ff.; Rule (ed.), *Standard History of Knoxville*, 84.
67. Hale, *DeKalb County*, 40-42; Thomas D. Clark, *The Rampaging Frontier* (Indianapolis, 1939), 232-33; Shields McIlwaine, *Memphis Down in Dixie* (New York, 1948), 100-101; Robertson, "Frolics, Fights and Firewater," 104-05.
68. James Flint, *Letters From America* (Cleveland, 1904), 138.
69. Peter Cartwright, *Autobiography* (Cincinnati, 1856), *passim*. See particularly pp. 90-91, at which point he describes how he quieted the "rowdies" in his church. James McCallum, *A Brief Sketch of the Settlement and Early History of Giles County, Tennessee* (Pulaski, 1928), 44; Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 116; Capers, *River Town*, 82; W. J. D. and David L. Spence, *A History of Hickman County, Tennessee* (Nashville, 1900), 172; Robertson, "Frolics, Fights and Firewater," 106-07.
70. Le Roy J. Halsey (ed.), *The Works of Philip Lindsley, D.D.* (3 vols., Philadelphia, 1866), III, 624; F. Garvin Davenport, "Cultural Life in Nashville on the Eve of the Civil War," *Journal of Southern History*, III (August, 1937), 326.
71. Kenneth Rose, "A Nashville Musical Decade, 1830-1840," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, II (September, 1943), 223; Macpherson, "German Element," 25.
72. Davenport, "Cultural Life," 337, 338-39; *Nashville American*, March 8, 30, April

- 1, 1851; Kenneth Rose, "Jenny Lind, Diva," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VIII (March, 1949), 34-48.
73. Davenport, *Cultural Life in Nashville*, 139-41; *Nashville Daily Gazette*, June 2, 1854.
74. *Nashville Daily News*, March 8, 9, 10, 19, 1859; Davenport, "Cultural Life," 341.
75. Harry R. Edwall, "Some Famous Musicians on the Memphis Concert Stage Prior to 1860," *W.T.H.S. Papers*, V (1951), 91, 93, 103; Capers, *River Town*, 131; Charles C. Ritter, "The Drama in Our Midst, The Early History of the Theater in Memphis," *W.T.H.S. Papers*, XI (1957), 15-16.
76. Capers, *River Town*, 131; Edwall, "Some Famous Musicians," 103; Harry R. Edwall, "The Golden Era of Minstrelsy in Memphis: A Reconstruction," *W.T. H.S. Papers*, No. IX (1955), 35.
77. Information from Miss Katherine Crews, Maryville College, engaged in research on a doctoral dissertation, "A History of Music in Knoxville, Tennessee, 1791-1910," at Florida State University.

CHAPTER XXIII

Humanitarian Reforms to 1860

FOR ALMOST FIVE DECADES after the War of 1812, the American people were blessed with peace and prosperity. Only the Mexican War and three periods of financial depression upset the otherwise placid scene. Such conditions, aided by an intellectual renaissance and humanitarian influences in the East and also abroad, were favorable for the rise and growth of humanitarianism in Tennessee. The state did not produce a Dorothea Dix, a Neal Dow, or a Thomas W. Dorr,* but Tennesseans were aware of the trends toward altruism and interests of mankind. They quickly fell in step with those who sought to help the less fortunate of society. A revision of the harsh penal codes, the construction of a state penitentiary and a hospital for the mentally ill, education and training for the handicapped, and an overall emphasis on raising individual morals, were matters to which they turned their attention in the decades before the War for Southern Independence.¹

The Tennessee constitution and code were taken from many sources, the former being copied chiefly from the constitutions of Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Both states had harsh criminal codes, and local legislators adopted them with little modification. Horse thieves suffered death on the gallows just as did murderers, and a perjurer stood in the pillory for one hour with his ears nailed, after which both ears were severed and left "nailed on the pillory. . . ." Various state historians have recorded stories—probably true—of man's inhumanity to man during Tennessee's early years. For example, a Clarksville Negro, convicted of murder, was sentenced to death on the gallows. To make the punishment serve as a deterrent to other would-be murderers, the court further decreed that the Negro's head be severed after his execution and attached to a pole which stood on the corner of Main and Fourth Streets. The order was carried out, and the skull became a solemn warning—although no doubt a malodorous one—to all passers-by. A Stewart County man painfully wounded another, and was sen-

* Miss Dix was a Massachusetts humanitarian who sought better care for the insane. Her work and influence in Tennessee will be discussed later in this chapter. Neal Dow was a leader of prohibition forces in Maine, and under his guidance his state enacted the first prohibition law ever passed in this country (1846). Dorr was from Rhode Island, and took the lead in the movement to extend the privilege of voting to all men, irrespective of property ownership.

tenced to be whipped publicly, cropped on both ears, and branded on the arms with hot wine. In Washington County, Elias Pybourn was convicted of horse stealing. He escaped the death penalty but his sentence included confinement in the pillory for one hour, having both ears nailed to the pillory and severed at the end of the hour, thirty-nine lashes "well laid on," and branding with the letter H on the right cheek and the letter T on the left cheek. A Madison County man, convicted of manslaughter, in addition to being otherwise punished, was sentenced to be branded with the letter M. Counterfeiters, according to an 1811 statute, received as punishment, for the offense, the following:

39 stripes on his, her or their bare back, be imprisoned not less than six months, nor more than two years, shall sit in the pillory two hours on three different days, and shall be rendered infamous, and pay the costs of the prosecution, and shall also be branded on the brawn of the left thumb with the letter T.

For the second offense counterfeiters received death "without benefit of clergy." Penalties were so severe that jurors not infrequently refused to return a verdict of guilty, not because they were convinced of the innocence of the suspect, but because of the severity of the punishment. Too, judges entreated the governors to issue stays of execution in many cases.²

John Sevier gave attention to the need for revision of the penal code in his message to the legislature in 1807. The Governor observed that Tennessee lagged behind other states in abolishing cruel and unusual punishments, and told legislators that "Humanity and policy call aloud" for a "revisal" of the "sanguinary laws." His entreaty met with meager results, however. The lawmakers proceeded to abolish the death penalty for some offenses, including larceny of goods valued at ten dollars or less, forgery, perjury, malicious prosecutions, arson, and harboring stolen horses—but only for first offenders; death was prescribed for the second offense. For the first misdeed such penalties as confinement in the pillory, public whippings, imprisonment in jail, and branding with a hot iron, were meted out. On horse thieves the letters H.T. were to be branded "on such part of . . . [the criminal's] person" as the court might direct.³

For the next decade the quest for penal reform lay dormant. Humanitarians soon, however, revived the matter and pushed it to the forefront. The editor of a Nashville paper in 1819 expressed the feelings of many when he wrote that "Sanguinary punishments are the instruments of despotism . . . the policy now to be pursued, is to *prevent* offences [*sic*] and *reform* the perpetrators rather than *exterminate* them." Many others expressed the need for a place where the criminal might be housed during his period of punishment so that he might become penitent for his crime. Several of the Northern and Eastern states had constructed modern penitentiaries by 1821. In 1813

Tennessee legislators made a feeble effort toward establishing a penitentiary by providing for voluntary subscriptions to a building fund. Clerks of county courts were required to open subscription lists and accept any and all contributions. The plan failed, however, when only a few hundred dollars were subscribed during the biennium. In 1815 the legislature continued the matter for another two years, and made it obligatory on justices of the peace to submit the subscription list to all taxpayers. Still only small amounts were collected. By the beginning of Governor Joseph McMinn's third term (1819) considerable sentiment existed which was favorable to a revision of the penal code, and the executive took a strong stand in favor of a thorough revision. According to McMinn, "the dispositions of men" then were less inclined to demand rigorous punishments than in frontier days, and there would be, he predicted, fewer convictions in the future than before. A satisfactory prison should be constructed, the Governor said, which would "do lasting honor to its founders." He suggested that necessary funds could be borrowed from the state bank, and that a saving in costs would result from the use of convict labor.⁴

The lawmakers responded to the Governor's message by considering a bill which would amend the penal laws and establish a "penitentiary house." This measure, which was passed in the house but tabled in the senate, would have abolished the death penalty for all crimes except first degree murder, and would have brought about a virtual abandonment of the pillory, the whipping post, and cropping and branding.⁵

As has been observed in an earlier chapter, William Carroll was elected governor in 1821 on a reform ticket. In his initial message to the legislature Carroll decried the fact that harsh laws resulted in jurors refusing to convict known offenders. Not only did many people oppose croppings, brandings, and whippings, he said, but the practices served to make culprits "insensible to infamy" and to harbor a spirit of revenge against mankind. He advised a scale of punishment bearing a just proportion to the magnitude of each offense, and a penitentiary where solitary confinement, coarse food, and hard labor might afford the criminal ample opportunity to repent privately for his crime. In response to his recommendations, the legislators considered a bill quite similar to one discussed two years earlier, but it met a similar fate. Sectional jealousies brought disagreement over the location of the proposed prison, and some legislators believed that construction and maintenance of a state penitentiary would place too great a financial burden upon the resources of the state.⁶

During the next half decade much talk but little action ensued. The General Assembly of 1825 instructed the governor to gather information relative to the construction and operation of prisons in the Northern and Eastern states and to report his findings. Carroll acted accordingly and procured information from prison officials in Kentucky, Virginia, Ohio, New Jersey, New

Hampshire, and Maryland. Considerable data were assembled and presented to the legislature, after which the Governor concluded that Tennessee legislators should delay no longer in the matter of building a prison. He carefully pointed out to the lawmakers, who often were miserly and rarely generous about such matters, that a well regulated penitentiary could pay its own expenses, while at that very time the confinement of criminals in county jails cost from ten to fifteen thousand dollars annually. A penitentiary, Carroll believed, was "better calculated to arrest the progress of crime and reform the guilty, than any penal code that has heretofore been devised." He recommended that a prison be built in which each convict might have a separate cell at night and where there would be no communication between the "hardened villain and the young and pliant offender." A comprehensive bill, aimed at the establishment of a prison and a revision of the criminal code, was introduced, but like those of 1821 and 1825, it failed in the senate.⁷

Governor Carroll concluded his third term in 1827 and was constitutionally barred from seeking another consecutive term. Following the two-year interim in which Houston and Hall served, Carroll returned to the gubernatorial chair and resumed the fight for a state penitentiary and for a revision of the "cruel and sanguinary criminal laws." He found especially revolting the practice of incarcerating young criminals in the same rooms "with the old and hardened culprits," which rendered the former "quite unfitted for honest and industrious pursuits" when they left prison. As in 1827, he recommended that "the criminal be confined within the naked walls of his solitary cell at night, cut off from all communication with every human being. . . ." Such, Carroll believed, would cause the prisoner to "direct his thoughts to his present condition and past conduct, and sooner or later [he] will discover the evils of an ill spent life; and the inevitable consequence in most instances will be amendment."⁸ The prison plan which Carroll and most of the humanitarians favored was the Auburn type, although other types had been well received in some states. The former, taking its name from the prison in Auburn, New York, required solitary confinement at night but permitted congregate, although silent, work during the day. Other systems, particularly the Pennsylvania plan, called for solitary confinement both night and day.⁹

The Governor's message this time (1829) did not go unheeded. Measures providing for both a revision of the harsh penal code and the construction of a penitentiary were enacted. One newspaper editor described it as an act which would stand for centuries as "a proud monument of our early legislative wisdom," and a Knoxville writer saw in it ample evidence of the state's progress "in refinement and humanity."¹⁰

The new criminal code provided imprisonment at hard labor in the new penitentiary for felons. It abolished the whipping post and the practice of cropping and confinement in the pillory and stocks. First-degree murder and

accessory before the fact were punishable by death, and there was strong support for the efforts of Senator Newton Cannon and others to abolish the death penalty entirely. Considerable disagreement occurred over the location of the penitentiary, as hometown legislators vied with one another. Nashville, Knoxville, Jasper, and other cities and towns were considered, but finally a suitable area "within two miles of Nashville" was agreed upon. Three commissioners were chosen to supervise construction, and they began work immediately. An architect was employed, and a ten-acre tract between the lower Franklin and Charlotte turnpikes, one mile west of the Davidson County courthouse, was purchased. The structure was patterned after the Wethersfield, Connecticut, prison, which was of the Auburn cell-block type. It was completed within less than a year, although the estimated cost of \$65,000* was almost double the original estimate. The prison was ready for use on January 1, 1831. A contemporary writer described the new building as a

beautiful and substantial Prison It presents a front of three hundred and ten feet, and is three hundred and fifty in depth. The two wings of the front building contain two hundred cells, and half of the center building is occupied by the Keeper, and the other half is used for a hospital, guard rooms, etc. The yard walls are four and a half feet thick at the bottom, and three at the top, and have an average height of twenty feet.

Convicts were transferred at once, and George Washington Cook, a Jackson tailor convicted of stabbing, became the first inmate. Six months later Cook had been joined by others, whom the editor of a Nashville paper found to be "well behaved." The editor observed that the prisoners "have prosecuted their labor with industry. . . ," and that the warden was to be commended for his excellent administration. He observed that the prisoners were served "a sufficiency of food, coarse, . . . but wholesome," three times a day.¹¹

During the next three decades the state prison increased in size; plant facilities expanded, more land was bought, and the number of criminals housed at state expense increased considerably. The prison also posed problems, which came to the attention of the press, the legislature, and the citizenry in general. An immediate problem was that of finding suitable work for the prisoners. During the first year the penitentiary was stocked with machinery and tools so that by December, 1831, convicts worked in eleven different occupations, including hat making, tailoring, carpentry, and blacksmithing. That convicts were being taught trades brought complaints from mechanics, who protested when prison-made goods were placed on the open market. Governor Jones brought the case of the mechanics to the attention of legislators in 1843,

* Eastin Morris, *The Tennessee Gazetteer* (Nashville, 1834), 120, lists the cost at "less than \$50,000." Senator J. P. Hardwicke, Chairman of the Joint Select Committee on the Penitentiary in 1839, reported the cost at \$65,000.

but they were afforded no remedy. Several years later, Governor Andrew Johnson pleaded the cause of the mechanics and tradesmen, and accused the legislators of maintaining the penitentiary as a "State mechanic institute." Honest mechanics, he said, were being taxed to support the prison and at the same time were forced to compete with the state-maintained "training institution." His pleas fell upon leaden ears, however, and one legislator accused the Governor of raising problems for which there was no adequate solution. No satisfactory adjustment of the controversy was made until after the Civil War. Within a decade after the penitentiary was built, the concept of the reformatory nature of such a prison faded into oblivion. Governor Johnson declared in 1853 and in 1855 that the "moral condition of not one in a thousand convicts was improved by being incarcerated in the state prison." By 1857 the penitentiary chaplain had despaired of the penitentiary ever becoming a school "of reform for the unfortunate, the ignorant and the vicious." Yet, on the other hand, he believed that kind treatment and religious instruction were having a "beneficial reaction," and that wholesome and nutritious food had done much to improve the health and countenance of the prisoners.¹²

Laws designed to ameliorate living conditions of the prisoners were enacted throughout the period. Coarse but substantial food was served, and in 1837, at the insistence of Senator J. P. Hardwicke of Dickson County, convicts were furnished tobacco at state expense. Hardwicke's efforts to provide a chaplain for the prisoners met failure, but ten years later a clergyman began ministering to their spiritual needs. Little was done to teach inmates to read and write, however, and not until 1865 did a law provide for one hour of instruction per week in fundamentals. In 1857, of the 286 prisoners, only 78 could read and write. The penitentiary was enlarged considerably during the 1850's. Thirty-two cells were added by 1853, and in 1858 a new wing containing 120 cells was constructed, making a total of 352. All cells were small, in keeping with the Auburn system, and measured six and one-half feet in length, three feet in width, and seven feet in height.*¹³

During the three decades before the Civil War, humanitarians led a movement to abolish capital punishment. Many Americans had absorbed much from the teachings of John Locke, among which was a concept that natural law demanded of a murderer his own life in return, since no other reparation could compensate for such a crime. All were familiar with the Old Testament law, and the concept was written into the statute books of all the states. As early as 1829, however, Newton Cannon, then in the upper house of the Tennes-

* Enoch C. Wines showed in his study of forty-five prisons in thirty-eight states that the average size of cells was eight feet long, four and one-half feet wide, and seven and one-fourth feet high. Obviously, the cells in the Tennessee penitentiary were slightly smaller. *The State of Prisons and of Child-Saving Institutions in the Civilized World* (Cambridge, 1880), 93.

see legislature, supported a measure which would substitute life imprisonment for capital punishment. Although his bill was not enacted the legislature did agree to abolish the death penalty in all cases except first degree murder and accessory before the fact to such crime, as has been mentioned earlier. Newspaper editors gave considerable attention to the matter during the next several years, especially to the "great frolic" which accompanied public hangings, which was detrimental to the citizens of all classes. In 1837 legislators of the state of Maine virtually abolished capital punishment, and their act served as an example for other states. Agitation for a similar law in Tennessee continued throughout the period but without success.¹⁴

Contemporaneous with the movement for a revision of the criminal code was a growing demand for the repeal of laws which provided for the imprisonment of debtors. Many pointed to the futility of such legislation, which before 1811 provided for incarceration of defaulters regardless of how small the amount of money involved. In 1811, however, a measure was enacted which would release debtors, after ten days confinement, who had less than ten dollars "in any worldly goods or substance" besides wearing apparel, tools, and arms for muster. Governor McMinn, in 1821, urged the repeal of debtor laws, after the legislature during the previous session had defeated a measure to repeal them. It was not until 1842 that imprisonment for debt was abolished completely, although a law exempting female debtors had been enacted in 1827. A Nashville newspaper editor called the act of 1842 "a noble victory." It was "A Proud . . . [day] for Tennessee" now that "this relic of a barbarous age . . . no longer stains our statute books!"¹⁵

Care for the Insane—The movement for better care of the insane did not begin as early as did the agitation for revision of the criminal code and better prison facilities. Many Tennesseans, not unlike people of other parts of the country, still clung to the medieval idea that mental illness was a visitation of divine displeasure and was something of which the afflicted and his family should be ashamed. In many cases people of unsound mind were mistreated by being chained in a cellar or attic, flogged into obedience, and slowly starved by an inadequate diet. The great Eastern humanitarian, Dorothea Lynde Dix, visited Tennessee in 1847 and described the insane of the state as unfortunate people who were

Pining in cells and dungeons, pent in log-cabins, bound with ropes, restrained by leathern thongs, burthened with chains . . . cast out, cast off, like the Pariah of the Hindoos, from comfort, hope, and happiness, . . .¹⁶

Before Miss Dix visited the state attention had been given to the problem of the insane. By North Carolina law lunatics who owned property had been made wards of the state. Shortly after Tennessee was admitted to the Union

the legislature authorized members of county courts to appoint guardians for mental defectives who had property. The violently insane could be confined in the county jails, and lunatics having no means of support would be "let out" for maintenance to the lowest bidder. Little legislative attention was given these unfortunate citizens, however, during the first three decades of the nineteenth century.¹⁷

The first significant act came in 1832, when the legislature appropriated \$10,000 for a hospital, to be located at Nashville, for the insane. After the appointment of building commissioners, plans were made for construction of facilities to house 200 patients. Three years later the building was not completed, and \$5,000 in additional funds were made available. Dr. James Overton was named as agent to inspect hospitals of the Eastern and Northern states in order to procure better plans. Overton returned full of enthusiasm and urged legislators to continue the work which had been begun. In 1837 Governor Cannon urged that additional funds be appropriated. A legislative committee, appointed to investigate the progress of construction, found a half-built structure "in bad order" and "daily and hourly injuring" from exposure to rain and weather. The members recommended an appropriation of \$40,000 for the biennium and thought it would be sufficient to complete the project. The legislature accepted the report, but appropriated little more than one-third the suggested amount. In 1839 a legislative committee found that sixty rooms were ready for use, but an additional appropriation would be necessary to finish the undertaking. More funds were made available. New trustees were appointed, whose duties included the selection of a resident physician, a matron, and other employees.¹⁸

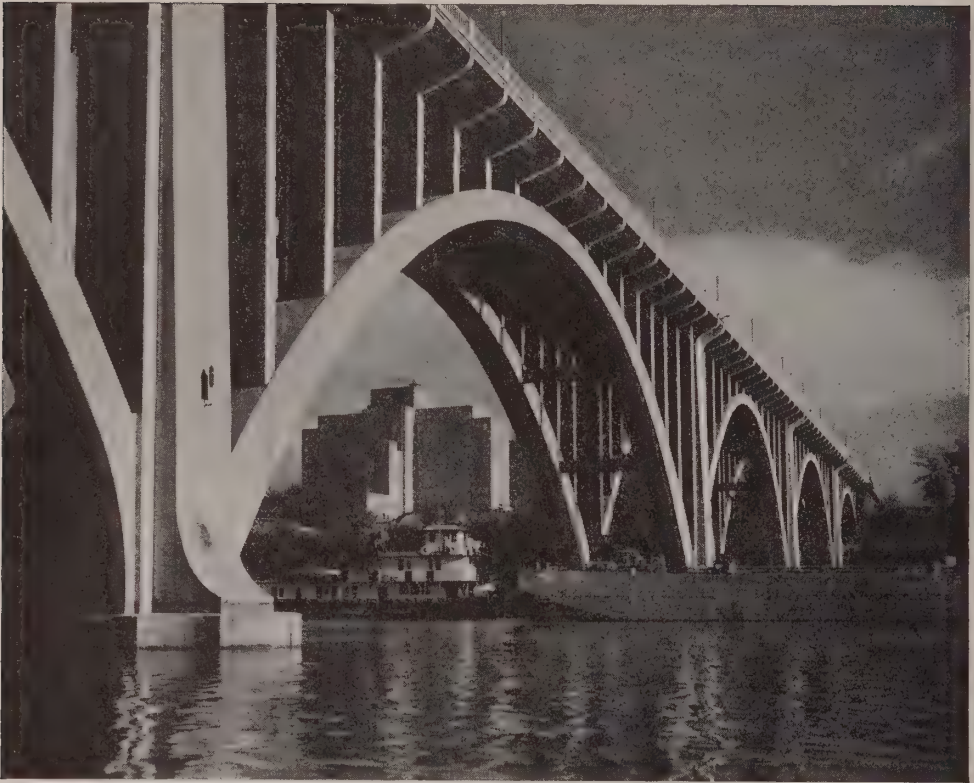
Throughout the 1840's legislators were reminded frequently of the inadequate hospital. Tennessee had approximately 800 people who were mentally defective but had hospital facilities for only sixty. Governor Polk in 1841 recommended "the reception and accommodation of all unfortunate persons . . . for whose benefit the institution was established," and Governor Jones, in his first message to the general assembly in the same year, asked for an additional appropriation for improvements. In 1843 the asylum physician estimated that there were almost one thousand mentally diseased persons in the state, many of whom were maintained in county jails and poor houses. With an abundance of statistical information he showed the lawmakers that a considerable amount of money would be saved in each county if the state hospital were enlarged sufficiently to take care of those who now were public charges. In the same year Governor Jones "witnessed with the deepest regret" the indifference with which the hospital seemed to be regarded by both legislators and the public in general. Again he requested a large appropriation to aid "this unfortunate class of our fellow-citizens." A legislative committee appointed in 1845 recommended "enlargement and modernization" of the hospital, and

in the following year an unsuccessful attempt was made to sell the building and construct a more commodious one elsewhere. On the eve of Miss Dix's visit in December, 1847, editors of the Nashville *Republican Banner* and the Nashville *Daily Union* visited the hospital, and both found it "a model of neatness and regularity." They praised the administration but criticized the lawmakers for not enlarging facilities.¹⁹

Dorothea Lynde Dix* arrived in Nashville in December, 1847, and was hailed by the local press as "one of the most distinguished philanthropists of the age." She had visited almshouses, prisons, and hospitals in practically every state, as well as in Europe, and, though frail and tubercular, she had devoted her life to the improvement of prisons and institutions for the insane. Although her work was confined largely to the North, where she found considerably more insanity than in the Southern states, she had agreed at the insistence of local humanitarians to come to Tennessee. She visited the State Hospital on several different days and found it to have "prominent defects." The county jails and poor houses which she also visited she found to be deplorable. At the State Hospital she found the heating facilities to be "a complete failure," and observed that there were "no bathrooms . . . no bakery, no meat house, no smoke-house, no ice-house, no corn-crib nor meal-bin, no spring-house, milk-house, nor sheds for storing coal, wood, etc., . . . no cisterns, and no wells which afford a supply of water. . . ." These findings Miss Dix presented in a memorial to the legislature and made extensive recommendations for improvement. The "first step," she said, should be to buy from one to two hundred acres for a new hospital. It should be readily accessible from all points and have an adequate supply of water. The building itself should be constructed "for use and *comfort*, not for display and needless ornament"—and should be large enough to house 250 patients. It should be separated into two divisions; one for patients deemed curable and the other for those hopelessly insane. Care should be taken to avoid the appearance of a prison, so that patients might have every psychological advantage possible for their recovery. Finally, she appealed to state pride as she urged legislators to perpetuate the state's "memory in the hearts of her grateful children" by erecting a first-rate hospital for the mentally diseased.²⁰

Humanitarians published Miss Dix's memorial and distributed it throughout the state with good results. Legislators gave the Massachusetts reformer a vote of thanks, and enacted a measure whereby the governor would appoint seven commissioners to purchase a tract of land and supervise the construction of a new hospital with those features which Miss Dix had recommended. A site on the Murfreesboro road, six miles from Nashville, was purchased, and construction was begun in the autumn of 1848. Work moved slowly, how-

* For an able and recent biography of Miss Dix, see Helen Marshall, *Dorothea Dix, Forgotten Samaritan* (Chapel Hill, 1937).



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

Knoxville—Henley Bridge, with East Tennessee Baptist Hospital Framed in Arch

ever, because of inadequate funds. Governor William Trousdale in his final legislative message (October, 1851) observed that the hospital was ready at last for occupancy. A few months later patients were transferred to the new one. Not until 1857, however, was the structure finished according to the original plans.²¹

Training for the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb—The humanitarian spirit of the period also gave rise to a widespread demand for public assistance to the blind and the deaf mutes. Typical of the comments with regard to these unfortunate people was one by a Nashville editor, who described them as being “cut off from all the pursuits of life . . . confined in narrow limits, . . . doomed forever to pace the same eternal cage.” Those who were born blind or had lost their sight were sorely neglected during the first half century of the country’s development. One of the first efforts in their behalf came from James Champlin,



Memphis—Medical Center

(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

a blind son of an Overton County merchant, who returned to Tennessee in 1842 from a period of training in a Northern institution and established a school for the blind in Nashville. In the following year he appeared before the legislature to seek aid in the establishment of a state-supported school. The lawmakers feebly responded by appropriating \$3,000 for the biennium, but they also authorized the solicitation of private contributions. Several wealthy individuals gave generously, and within a few months after the passage of the act the institution was opened with expanded facilities.²²

The school, laboring under the difficulties of small enrollment and inadequate operating capital, progressed slowly. Although it was estimated that there were more than 400 blind persons in the state, only twenty had been admitted to the school by 1847. Many parents were indifferent, ignorant of the advantages which the school could provide, and prejudiced and embittered because of their children's plight. Newspaper editors, pleading for more school support, urged legislators, clergymen, physicians, and postmasters to advertise the school in their respective communities. There was little immediate response, however.²³

In 1847 the school trustees informed the legislature that inadequate facilities accounted for the lack of students. They proposed that the plant be expanded or that a new one be built. Three years later the trustees were authorized to erect a school "in or near the city of Nashville," and \$4,000 were appropriated for that purpose. Two years later an additional \$8,000 were appropriated for the biennium, and the trustees proceeded immediately to purchase one and one-half acres on the Lebanon road where they began construction of a three-story brick building. In 1858 support of the school was placed on a per capita basis, with \$200 being apportioned for each student. Provisions were made for thirty students, with no limit on age. They were taught arithmetic, chemistry, history, geography, spelling, grammar, and other subjects.²⁴

Considerable attention was focused upon the deaf and dumb during the two decades before the Civil War. As early as 1831 John A. Jacob, principal of a Kentucky school for the deaf, addressed the Tennessee legislature in the interest of education for such unfortunate people, and presented one of his pupils in order to demonstrate his ability to read and comprehend. Favorable sentiment crystallized slowly, however, and thirteen years elapsed following Jacob's visit before Tennessee legislators acted favorably toward the concept of a state-supported school. Finally, in January, 1844, when the question of aid for the blind was raised, assistance for the deaf also was considered. Senator John Cocke of Grainger County added a rider to Senator D. W. Moorman's bill to aid Champlin's school for the blind. It provided for a school for the deaf to be located at Knoxville. The measure providing for schools for both the blind and the deaf was passed, but by very slim margins in both houses. Tennessee became the seventh state to establish a school for the deaf.²⁵

As was true in the case of education for the blind, interest in the institutions for the deaf and dumb developed slowly. The school began operation with only six pupils, and by 1853 the trustees reported that not more than twenty-five persons had availed themselves of the opportunities which the school afforded, although there were over 500 deaf mutes, about one-fourth of them of school age. The trustees blamed the parents for the lack of interest, of whom it was said that they were

from the humbler walks of life, and . . . unacquainted with the efforts that have been made for the improvement in their condition They regard their children as unfortunate outcasts from society, incapable of improvement, and their impression is, that no person but themselves can understand [them] They feel . . . that if their child should be sick, no one but the family could understand his wants.²⁶

In the same year an agent was employed "for the purpose of hunting up pupils and relieving the minds of parents respecting the difficulties which prevented them from sending their children" to the school.²⁷

The agent's efforts must have been effective. During the next fifteen years interest mounted considerably, and by the time of the Civil War the school had eighty pupils, all housed in comfortable and commodious buildings. No effort was made during this period to develop speech or to teach lip reading. The sign language was taught to serve as a means of communication between the deaf. The six-year curriculum included pantomime, Bible history, arithmetic, geography, history, chemistry, and a variety of other subjects. In 1857 manual training, chiefly shoemaking and cabinet work, was added.²⁸

The Poor, Orphans, and Other Unfortunates—Humanitarians of the pre-Civil War period also gave attention to improving the living conditions of the dependent poor. As early as 1797 state legislators had empowered justices of the peace to "take cognizance" of all the poor and adjudge which of them should receive public aid. For their support county courts were authorized to levy a tax, the amount not to exceed six cents on each hundred acres of land, six cents on each Negro slave, and three cents on each free person. A few counties maintained "poor houses," but in general the practice was to lodge paupers with individuals who provided subsistence for minimum fees. Since the county courts in general allowed only a small amount for maintenance of the poor, their lot in life was most undesirable. Some improvement resulted from a legislative enactment in 1826. Under this law county courts were authorized to levy additional taxes and appoint building commissioners for the construction of necessary buildings for the accommodation of the poor. Following this act, more counties purchased farm land on which they built poor houses and employed the able-bodied in its cultivation. This

practice continued indefinitely, and is still followed in many of the counties today.²⁹

The reform spirit also was manifested during the period by the development of privately established benevolent institutions. The sympathies of many, notably socially prominent matrons, were stirred particularly by the unfortunate conditions of destitute orphans. Even before Tennessee became a state recognition was given to the needs of orphans, when the North Carolina legislature gave county and circuit courts authority to appoint guardians for minor orphans who had property. In 1815 a law was passed requiring justices of the peace to report to the county court the names of orphans in their districts. During the 1830's the legislature occasionally received petitions for the relief of orphans, but little was accomplished toward that end during the decade. In 1845 "a few benevolent ladies" of Nashville purchased a dwelling house which they converted into an orphanage for girls, and, by October of 1845, they had "ten or twelve interesting children" in their home. In the following year the ladies applied for and received a charter for their institution, which was called the Nashville Protestant Orphan Asylum. The trustees named were women, and included such socially prominent ladies as Mrs. John Bell and Mrs. Boyd McNairy. In the same year the Nashville Protestant School of Industry was incorporated, for the support and education of destitute girls. Mrs. Aaron V. Brown, Mrs. Francis B. Fogg, and other prominent Nashvillians were named as trustees, and they immediately began soliciting funds. Lecture series were conducted, "ice cream soirees" were staged, and other fund raising campaigns were planned. Throughout the 1850's considerable attention was given to the plight of destitute orphans. In 1856 a group known as the Robertson Association was organized for the purposes of apprenticing orphans to learn suitable trades and to assist the destitute of Nashville during severe winters. In 1859 the Nashville Orphan Asylum was chartered, to care for indigent male orphans.³⁰

The Temperance Movement—A temperance movement was a part of the reform program, although drinking by both men and women was quite common during the colonial years and the period of the early republic. Throughout the Revolutionary War quantities of intoxicants, when available, were issued to the troops along with rations. In the ensuing pioneer days in Tennessee and Kentucky, Daniel Boone, William Blount, James Robertson, and others took many a "snort" for health's and old times' sakes, and large hogsheads of "red eye" flowed freely at the social and political gatherings. Many preachers—principally Baptists and Methodists of the rougher sort—drank not infrequently. Peter Cartwright, the backwoods circuit rider who preached throughout Middle Tennessee for years after the Great Revival of 1800, wrote in his *Autobiography*:

From my earliest recollection drinking . . . in family and social circles . . . was considered harmless. . . . It was almost universally the custom for preachers, in common with all others, to take drams; and if a man would not have



Clarksville—New Memorial Hospital

it in his family, his harvest, his house-raising, log-rollings, weddings, and so on, he was considered parsimonious and unsociable; and many, even professors of Christianity, would not help a man if he did not have spirits and treat the company. . . . At a court time in Springfield, Tennessee . . . a very popular Baptist preacher, who was evidently intoxicated, . . . [drank] the health of the company. . . . I have often seen it carried and used freely at large baptizings, where the ordinance was administered by immersion.³¹

Despite the tendency to use strong drink, a temperance movement developed in the central and eastern section even before Tennessee became a state. The first anti-liquor law affecting Tennessee was enacted by North Carolina in 1779. It restricted drinking to homes and establishments for travelers and made illegal the retailing of intoxicants in quantities of less than a quart. The legislators intended to eliminate saloons—or “tippling houses”—where liquor could be bought and consumed on the premises. This statute, which prescribed a restricted licensing system, had been modified slightly by 1831, but it was the basis for liquor regulation until that time. Many tippling houses existed in open violation of the law, however, and state legislators in 1831, apparently despairing of the enforcement of the law, legalized saloons. Proprietors were required to procure licenses from the clerks of the county courts and give bonds that they would keep peaceful and orderly houses and not permit gambling therein. As if to salve their own consciences, the legislators prescribed that all licensing fees should be used for the support of the public schools.³²

In the meantime prominent temperance leaders over the state prepared for combat and became highly critical of the law of 1831. Some formed temperance societies to dissuade people from the consumption of alcoholic beverages; others established temperance journals, and still others memorialized the legislature for stricter liquor laws. Two temperance societies, probably the first in the state, were organized in 1829. One was formed at Kingsport, where members condemned intemperance and pledged themselves neither to vote for candidates who sought support with liquor nor to employ persons who drank while at work. The other was at Nashville, where Robert Foster, William Hume, Philip Lindsley, Robert Whyte,* and other prominent citizens organized the "Nashville and Davidson County Temperance Society, Auxiliary to the American Temperance Society." This group, "perceiving and lamenting the incalculable evils which . . . [result] from the improper use of distilled spirits," agreed to meet quarterly, to evangelize in an effort to procure additional members, and to subscribe to the following pledge:

We, the undersigned, do hereby agree that we will abstain wholly from the use of distilled spirits (except for medicinal purposes); that we will discourage the use of them in our families, not provide them for the entertainment of our friends, or for persons in our employment; that we will abstain from the business of making them or selling them by large or small, and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance the use of them in the community.³³

Governor Carroll joined the fight when he asserted in 1831 that "too free use of ardent spirits" was the leading cause for the commission of crime, and cited the testimony of three-fourths of the penitentiary inmates who attributed their downfall to strong drink. He urged legislators to join with the "wise and virtuous everywhere" to aid in countering the influence of intoxicants. Several temperance journals were established. In 1833 the Reverend James Smith published the Nashville *Western Philanthropist*, which he described as "Devoted to Temperance and general Benevolence." Four years later the Reverend Darius Hoyt founded in Maryville the *Temperance Banner*. He sought to focus attention upon domestic difficulties caused by drunken fathers and wished to save "husbands and . . . fathers . . . from the ignominy and horrors of a drunkard's life and a drunkard's grave." Scores of petitions were sent to legislators during the half decade following the law of 1831. Typical was one presented in 1837 by 374 Nashville women, who described intemperance as "the hot bed in which nine tenths of the crimes daily perpetrated are engendered" and which carry "distruction [*sic*] from

* For an able presentation of the life and work of Whyte, see Enoch Mitchell, "Robert Whyte, Agrarian, Lawyer, Jurist," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (March, 1951), 3-24.

the center to every extremity of the country." The ladies admitted that the suppression of the tippling houses would not be an overnight cure-all, but they were confident that "many of the horrors" of the "blighting curse" might be driven from the land.³⁴

A joint legislative committee was appointed in 1837 to analyze the liquor problems confronting the state. Its members were critical of the law of 1831, and pointed to the fact that intoxicants were within the reach of the "aged, the young, the halt, the blind; and lastly the slaves, . . . [who] in . . . turn drown . . . their cares in the flowing bowl." Consequently, in January, 1838, the legislators enacted a measure which repealed the laws licensing tippling houses, and made the retail of spirituous liquors a violation of the law. Within a few weeks after the enactment of the bill Isham Dyer was arraigned for retailing at his tavern "a certain gill of spirituous liquors." The lower courts found him guilty, and the case was taken to the state supreme court. There the lower courts were sustained on the ground that the legislators in repealing the general licensing law of 1831 had failed to revive the previous legislation authorizing the retailing of liquors at taverns. Thus the act of 1838 completely prohibited the sale of intoxicants in quantities of less than a quart and came to be known as the "Quart Law." Members of the Tennessee Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Nashville in 1839, described the measure as one which has "not only been productive of much good at home, but has given your state fame abroad." "The song of the drunkard has been converted into the voice of domestic peace," it added, and "many a matron's heart has been made to swell with gratitude to God. . . ."³⁵

Despite the appeals by Methodists and others, it soon became apparent that the law of 1838 was a failure. In a few counties it was enforced, but in general "public opinion mocked at its execution." Consequently, its lack of enforcement, together with the very apparent need for revenue to pay the internal improvement debt, caused legislators in 1846 to repeal the measure of 1838. The state now returned to the licensing system, under which anyone might retail liquors who secured a license, took an oath that he would not sell on Sunday, would not permit gambling, and would not sell to minors without written permission from their parents or to slaves without permission from their masters. This law remained on the statute books until after the Civil War, except for two years (1856-1857) when the Quart Law of 1838 was resurrected.³⁶

Throughout the 1850's temperance leaders accelerated their efforts, and numerous petitions were filed in the general assembly. The state of Maine, under the leadership of Neal Dow and others, had enacted the first statute prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, and some Tennesseans demanded a "Maine law." In 1853 a Joint Select Committee on Tippling made a study of the conditions, and reported that a Maine law "is in-



(Courtesy Morristown Chamber of Commerce)

Morristown—Hamblen Hospital

consistent with all the general principles that protect persons, property, possessions, and domicile, is inconsistent with the progress of liberty and free institutions in our republican nation. . . ." Senator John Reid, of Davidson County, proposed that a popular referendum be held in order to determine the people's wishes regarding a Maine law, but the bill was blocked in the committee room.³⁷

Leaders of the State Temperance Committee injected the liquor question into politics in 1855, and talked of nominating a candidate for governor. Proclaiming that they stood for total prohibition, they sent queries to both Andrew Johnson and Meredith P. Gentry, the two gubernatorial candidates. Each replied in a manner unsatisfactory to committee members, but Gentry's answer came nearer to meeting the demands than did Johnson's. The temperance advocates did not endorse either candidate, however, but advised members to concentrate upon selecting "friends of prohibition."³⁸

Other efforts were made to regulate public morals throughout the period. A Nashville editor in 1814 expressed concern over "The alarming increase of vice in the country," and urged that "something be done to check it." Some-time later, a contributor to the paper severely condemned horseracing, and described the track as a place of "Noise and dust; hard drinking; profane cursing and swearing; quarrelling; fighting; bloody noses; black eyes; fractured noses; [and] ragged citizens, who can not give bread to their wives and children" One year later the state legislature placed a heavy tax on vendors of playing cards, and in 1817, passed a law banning billiard tables and providing for a two thousand dollar fine for violators of the law. Senator William C. Roadman, of East Tennessee, described billiards as having

a tendency to encourage the vice of gambling which will eventually be attended with pernicious consequences to society, by corrupting the morals of the youth of our country, by the fascinating allurements. . . .³⁹

The continued agitation for reform evidenced a growing awareness of social evil on the part of the people. It was apparent that church and civic leaders were determined to remedy the evil as best they could. Considerable crime continued, however, especially in the cities. The river town of Memphis teemed with robbers and gamblers, and the Old Bell Tavern (whose proprietor claimed Andrew Jackson as a bosom friend) was a dive where liquor and confidence games were most common. Sections of the city of Nashville offered little by way of improvement. The river front area, known as "The Jungle," was especially notorious, and contained cheap saloons, brothels, and hideouts for criminals. Impudent blacks and intoxicated Irish not infrequently caused trouble, and drunken women of the street (in addition to some who were sober) nightly plied their wares.⁴⁰

Considerable good had been accomplished, however, by the time of the War for Southern Independence. That needless fratricidal struggle added crime and depredation, and counteracted much good which had been accomplished during the several previous decades. The reform movement in Tennessee, which was only a small part of a great current of liberal and humanitarian sentiment then sweeping the country, was largely experimental in nature, but gains had been made which future generations were to cherish.

CHAPTER XXIII—NOTES

1. An excellent study of humanitarian efforts in Tennessee during part of the period here considered is E. Bruce Thompson's "Humanitarian Reforms in Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1935). From his research Thompson has prepared two well-written articles, which are cited below.

2. Edward Scott, compiler, *Laws of the State of Tennessee, Including those of North Carolina now in Force in this State . . .* (2 Vols., Knoxville, 1821), I, 156; E. Bruce Thompson, "Reforms in the Penal System of Tennessee, 1820-1850," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (December, 1942), 293-298; Goodspeed, *History of Tennessee . . . with a Sketch of Montgomery County*, 784; *ibid.*, *Stewart County*, 905; *ibid.*, *Madison County*, 820; John Allison, *Dropped Stitches in Tennessee History* (Nashville, 1897), 51-52; *Public Acts*, 1811, Chap. I, 3-4; John D. Barnhart, "The Tennessee Constitution of 1796: A Product of the Old West," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (November, 1943), 546-48.
3. *Senate Journal*, 1807, p. 13; *Public Acts*, 1807, Chap. LXXIII, 120-24.
4. *Nashville Whig*, October 2, 6, 1819; Thompson, "Reforms in the Penal System," 295; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 327; *Public Acts*, 1813, Chap. LXXXVI, 100-01; *ibid.*, Chap. CXXV, 15-59; *Senate Journal*, 1819, p. 14; *House Journal*, 1819, pp. 6-17.
5. Thompson, "Reforms in Penal System," 296; *Nashville Gazette*, October 27, November 3, 1819; White (ed.), *Messages*, I, 560-61.
6. *Senate Journal*, 1821, pp. 95-96; *House Journal*, 1821, pp. 118-19, pp. 146-47; White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 18-19; *Nashville Whig*, October 17, 1821; Thompson, "Reforms in the Penal System," 297.
7. *Senate Journal*, 1825, p. 11; *ibid.*, 1826, pp. 147-57; White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 151-60; *Nashville Whig*, December 2, 1826.
8. *Senate Journal*, 1829, p. 105; *House Journal*, 1829, pp. 119-30.
9. Blake McKelvey, *American Prisons: A Study in American Social History Prior to 1915* (Chicago, 1936), 8; Jesse C. Crowe, "Agitation for Penal Reform in Tennessee, 1870-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1954), 5.
10. *Public Acts*, Chap. V, 5-7; Chap. XXIII, 27-45; *Sparta Recorder and Law Journal*, December 4, 1830, and *Knox Register* (Knoxville), February 2, 1831, cited in White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 279-81.
11. Eastin Morris, *The Tennessee Gazetteer* (Nashville, 1834), 120; Thompson, "Reforms in Penal System," 300-301; *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, January 24, July 4, 1831; Charles P. White, "Early Experiments with Prison Labor in Tennessee," E.T.H.S. Publications, No. 12 (1940), 47; *House Journal*, 1839-40, p. 919; Isabelle Green Kegley, "The Work of William Carroll as Governor of Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1933), 97.
12. Charles P. White, "Experiments with Prison Labor," 49; Jesse C. Crowe, "The Origin and Development of Tennessee's Prison Problem, 1831-1871," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XV (June, 1956), 115; "Penal Reform," 10; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 330; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 550-53, 652; *House Journal*, 1853, p. 540; "Chaplain's Report," in *Appendix, Senate and House Journal*, 1857-58, p. 84.
13. *Senate Journal*, 1837, p. 367; Crowe, "Tennessee's Prison Problem," 116; "Penal Reform," 7, 23; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 330; *Public Acts*, 1837-38, Chap. CLV, 222; *ibid.*, 1865-66, Chap. XXXIV, 48-52.
14. David Brion Davis, "The Movement to Abolish Capital Punishment in America, 1787-1861," *American Historical Review*, LXIII (October, 1957), 24, 33; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 48; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 328-29; *Nashville Whig*, January 22, 1840, October 28, 1843; *Nashville Republican*, January 27, 1835; *Nashville Union*, April 27, 1835.
15. Scott, *Laws*, II, 14-19, 25-30; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 38-39; *Nashville Gazette*, October 13, 1819; *Senate Journal*, 1821, p. 18; *Nashville Whig*, November 8, 1842; *Public Acts*, 1827, Chap. II, 3-4, Chap. III, 15.

16. *Senate Journal*, 1847, Appendix, 148; *House Journal*, 1847, Appendix, 259.
17. Scott, *Laws*, I, 322-23, 610-11.
18. *Public Acts*, 1832, Chap. XXXI, 45-46; *ibid.*, 1835-36, Chap. CXXX, 426-27; *ibid.*, 1839-40, Chap. LXX, 208-11; *ibid.*, 1837-38, Chap. CXXVIII, 194-95; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 324; *Senate Journal*, 1837, p. 19; *House Journal*, Appendix, 1837-38, pp. 804-06; *ibid.*, 1839-40, pp. 152-53.
19. *Senate Journal*, 1841-42, pp. 34-35, 124; *House Journal*, 1843, pp. 21-22; E. Bruce Thompson, "Reforms in the Care of the Insane in Tennessee, 1830-1850," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III (December, 1944), 327; *Senate Journal*, 1845-46, Appendix, 285-87; *Public Acts*, 1845-46, Chap. CLXXXIII, 277; *Republican Banner*, September 20, 1847; *Daily Union*, September 23, 1847.
20. *Republican Banner*, December 3, 1847; *Senate Journal*, 1847, Appendix, 148-70; *House Journal*, 1847, Appendix, 259-80.
21. Thompson, "Care of Insane," 332-34; *Public Acts*, 1847-48, Chap. CCV, 350-57; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 240-41; *Republican Banner*, February 4, 1848; *House Journal*, 1851, pp. 43-49; *Ibid.*, Appendix, 47.
22. *Nashville Whig*, January 6, 1844; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 105; *Public Acts*, 1843-44, Chap. CXC, 213-14; *Daily Union*, December 31, 1847.
23. *Senate Journal*, 1847-48, Appendix, 371; *Nashville Whig*, March 12, 1844.
24. *Senate Journal*, 1847-48, Appendix, 367; *Public Acts*, 1849-50, Chap. CXXVII, 321-24; *ibid.*, 1853-54, Chap. LXX, 140; John V. Armstrong, *History and Prospectus, Tennessee School for the Blind* (Nashville, 1898), 52; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 336; *Republican Banner*, September 20, 1847.
25. *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, October 5, 1831; *Public Acts*, 1843-44, Chap. CXC, 213-14; Mary Cohron, "History of the State Care of the Blind and Deaf in Tenn. (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1935), 10 ff.
26. *House Journal*, 1853-54, Appendix, 125.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 338; *Senate Journal*, 1847-48, Appendix, 113; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 130.
29. Scott, *Laws*, I, 593-95; *Public Acts*, 1826, Chap. LVI, 52-54; Thompson, "Humanitarian Reforms," 89.
30. *Ibid.*, 92; *Nashville Orthopolitan*, October 16, 1845, as cited in *ibid.*, 95; *Public Acts*, 1815, Chap. CXV, 124-25; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 338; *Public Acts*, 1845-46, Chap. LII, 105; *Daily Union*, September 10, 1845; *Republican Banner*, September 15, 1847; *Public Acts*, 1859, Chap. IV, 150-51.
31. Cartwright, *Autobiography*, edited by W. P. Strickland (New York, 1856), 212.
32. Scott, *Laws*, I, 245-48; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 339; Grace Leab, "Tennessee Temperance Activity, 1870-1899," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 21 (1949), 52; *Public Acts*, 1831, Chap. LXXX, 101; Leslie F. Roblyer, "The Fight for Local Prohibition in Knoxville, Tennessee, 1907," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 26 (1954), 27.
33. *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, October 9, 1829; "An Early Temperance Society at Nashville," *Tennessee Historical Magazine* (October, 1919), 142-44; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 342.
34. White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 342; *ibid.*, III, 245-48; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 343.
35. White (ed.), *Messages*, III, 251, 254; 323-24; *Public Acts*, 1837-38, Chap. CXX, 120; *Tennessee Supreme Court Reports*, 19 Tenn. 236; *House Journal*, 1839, p. 38.
36. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 346, *Public Acts*, 1845-46, Chap. XC, 154-58; Roblyer, "Fight for Prohibition," 27; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 262.
37. White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 607.

38. *Ibid.*, IV, 617-20.
39. *Nashville Clarion*, September 1, November 29, 1814, as cited in White, *Messages*, I, 457; *Senate Journal*, 1815, 114-15.
40. Capers, *River Town*, 68-69; Davenport, *Cultural Life in Nashville*, 199-200.

CHAPTER XXIV

Slavery Becomes a Political Issue

ANTISLAVERY MOVEMENTS AND THE PROSLAVERY REACTION—Slavery fastened its grip upon the South gradually. Before 1831 strong manumission sentiment had been present in every slaveholding state, and such men as Thomas Jefferson and John Marshall of Virginia, Governor William Chambers of Mississippi, Henry Clay of Kentucky, and William Crawford of Georgia, had been outspoken in their efforts to secure emancipation. Tennessee was no exception. Although the state had no anti-slavery leaders comparable to those mentioned above, prominent citizens frequently spoke out against the "peculiar institution." According to a tradition unsustained by documentary evidence, members of the constitutional convention of 1796 defeated a proposal to abolish slavery by a very small majority.¹

Thomas Embree and his sons, Elijah and Elihu—iron manufacturers of East Tennessee—were some of the earliest exponents of antislavery. Thomas was outspoken. He called upon Tennessee legislators to make possible "a gradual abolition of slavery of every kind," and urged the people of Washington and Greene counties to form antislavery societies. Apparently unhappy in the environment of his slaveholding neighbors and meeting with little response to his agitations, the elder Embree in 1800 moved with his wife and two daughters to Ohio. The iron business he left to his sons, who later indicated in a report to their father that their interests were valued at over \$100,000.²

Comparatively little antislavery sentiment developed before 1814. Shortly after the turn of the century Charles Osborn, a Quaker minister, preached against slavery in East Tennessee, but little is known of his activities. In December, 1814, eight Jefferson County citizens met at the home of Elihu Swain and formed the "Tennessee Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves." Two months later they met in the Lost Creek Meeting House of Friends and wrote a constitution which proclaimed that "freedom is the natural and unalienable right of all men. . . ." Neither immediate nor gradual emancipation was proclaimed as a goal, but the fact that members were gradualists soon became apparent. The few who favored immediate abolition soon moved from the state, some of them settling in the Northwest Territory where they became active in abolition work.³

The vast majority of emancipationists who remained in the state actively propagated their doctrines for well over a decade. They organized local societies in Washington, Sullivan, Blount, Grainger, and Cocke counties, and established the "Manumission Society of Tennessee" in 1815. In the following year the first annual convention after formation was held in Greene County where leaders boasted of sixteen branches with 474 members. There they proclaimed the object of their organization to be:

The gradual abolition of slavery . . . in our nation . . . by having laws passed declaring all those born after some fixed period, to be free at some reasonable age, and as a qualification for freedom that they be taught to read the Holy Scriptures and taught some occupation.

In 1822 and 1823 they restated their moderate position and proclaimed their desire to see "a gradual reform of our laws, so as to soften the bonds of slavery to those who now groan under the yoke," and "the gradual emancipation of slavery in our country." They proclaimed their gospel by petitions and speeches. In 1819, for example, thirty-five memorials with 1,975 signatures, each bearing a request for some kind of relief for the blacks, were submitted to the state legislature. While the petitions to Congress and the state legislature went unheeded, members of the society apparently did not become discouraged.⁴

In 1819 Elihu Embree, one of the leaders in the Jefferson County and Greene County movements, began the publication of *The Manumission Intelligencer* at Jonesboro. It was the first paper established in the United States devoted wholly to anti-slavery agitation. The Quaker editor had a sincere conviction that slavery was inhuman and denounced it as "one of the blackest" of crimes.* Until the panic of 1819 he was a man of means, and his family always was well respected in East Tennessee. The Jonesboro paper, a weekly, suspended publication after one year, but in April, 1820, Embree founded *The Emancipator* as a monthly. His untimely death at the age of thirty-eight brought an end to the journal after only seven issues had been published. It had met with phenomenal success, however, for after a few months it had a subscription list of approximately 2,000. Embree's achievement has been attributed to the fact that many people in East Tennessee shared his views on slavery, that they respected the high standing of the Embree family, and that in 1820 there were but two newspapers in that section of the state.⁵

Shortly after Embree's death, Benjamin Lundy established at Mt. Pleasant,

* Embree had been a slaveholder but later emancipated his Negroes. In 1808 he paid Alfred M. Carter \$1,000 for a skilled Negro worker whom he probably used in his iron works. Robert T. Nave, "A History of the Iron Industry in Carter County to 1860" (M. A. thesis, East Tennessee State College, 1953), 73; Frank Merritt, *Early History of Carter County, 1760-1861* (Knoxville, 1950), 153.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Oneida

Ohio, a paper which he called *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. East Tennesseans persuaded him to go to Greeneville where he continued the publication of his paper from April, 1822, to August, 1824. Like Embree, Lundy was closely affiliated with the Manumission Society and represented it several times in annual meetings of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.* His departure in 1824 left the East Tennessee manumissionists without a paper, and they planned immediately to launch another one under the name of "The Manumission Journal." Apparently this paper was never issued.⁶

* The American Convention had been formed in Philadelphia in 1794 as the first national antislavery society in America. A new constitution and a new name—"The American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African Race"—was adopted in 1818. Adams, *Neglected Period*, 154.

Membership of the Manumission Society of Tennessee was confined primarily to the East Tennessee counties. In 1824 a group of Middle Tennesseans met at Columbia and formed the "Moral Religious Manumission Society of West [now Middle] Tennessee." Their constitution denounced slavery as "the greatest act of practical infidelity," and described it as being "absolutely incompatible with the spirit of Christianity." Members deplored violence, and deemed "it unnecessary to make use of any other means but argument." In 1825 they requested other societies in the state to send preaching missionaries among the slaveholders.⁷

The manumission societies in Tennessee were short-lived, and practically all had ceased to exist by the mid-1830's. They had reached their zenith in the late 1820's when twenty-five societies boasted of a membership of 1,000. Most of the activity had been in the South; in 1827 all of the free states together had only twenty-four such societies. They had exerted a salutary influence upon the state, and actually had been a part of the reform movement discussed in an earlier chapter. Few if any members had expressed radical sentiments, but all had favored a gradual abolition of slavery over a long period of time. Elihu Embree, for example, himself a slaveholder, had emancipated most of his Negroes when he died in 1820. All had advocated more humane treatment of slaves and also had sought to train and educate them.* The good work came to an end after radical self-seekers, such as William Lloyd Garrison and Theodore Weld, in the early 1830's began ardently to advocate immediate, uncompensated abolition, by violent means if it were deemed "necessary." The influence of these extremists, together with a growing realization that the increasing demand for cotton attached a higher value to the slave, caused many people to withdraw their support and permit the societies to languish.⁸

Colonization was too expensive to be popular. While many slaveholders talked of sending their Negroes to Liberia, few probably had serious intentions because of the tremendous costs involved. To most Southerners, however, colonization represented the only satisfactory solution to the Negro problem. Few if any wanted thousands of freed Negroes in their midst, but many favored emancipation if the blacks could be colonized outside the country. Indicative of this sentiment is the legislative enactment in 1833 which

* Hundreds of the recorded wills indicate the master's interest in education for his slaves. Typical are the following: Elihu Embree wrote that for "each of Nancy's children" money should be provided for "schooling them to the best advantage that conveniently offers." George R. Witt of Fayette County provided that his wife "be allowed a reasonable compensation from year to year for . . . schooling . . . Negroes" Christopher Strong of Dickson County commanded his wife to "have those [slave] children, John Wesley and Tennessee, taught to read the Bible" Washington County Records, Will Book A, Will No. 1; Fayette County, Will Book A, 1836-1854, p. 165; Dickson County, Will Book A, 220. (WPA copies).

provided for a payment of ten dollars to the American Colonization Society* for the removal of each free Negro from the state. The Society, however, could not assume all the expense incident to the removal of the blacks; most of it fell upon the slaveowner himself, who in most cases was unable to bear the total cost. Not only did he lose the value of his slave, but he also found the cost of sending each Negro to be about \$180. The expense did not end even there; the emancipator sent along enough provisions to enable the freedmen to become established in their new environment.⁹

Despite these drawbacks, in 1829 the Tennessee Colonization Society was organized in Nashville with sixteen members. They chose as president Philip Lindsley, then president of the University of Nashville, and encouraged fellow Tennesseans to emancipate their slaves. General Logan Douglas of Williamson County, Montgomery Bell, who owned iron works throughout Middle Tennessee, and Christopher Strong of Dickson County, were three Tennesseans who sought to colonize their Negroes. All planned to send them to Liberia. Douglas's slaves were placed in the hands of Samuel Henderson, who went to Nashville on December 5, 1852, to "fit off" the Negroes. Strong's were placed in custody of Robert McNeilly, a prominent young Charlotte attorney. According to McNeilly's son, James, his father deposited the cargo on the Liberian shores in 1851 or 1852, but three years later he received the "most pitiful appeals" in which the Negroes requested McNeilly to return them to the United States. Several had died, and the majority by 1855 were on the verge of starvation. Two years before his death, in 1855, Bell offered to free his 300 slaves. They would be required to go to Liberia, but Bell would pay their transportation costs and furnish them with six month's provisions. About ninety blacks accepted the offer, and assembled in the early winter of 1853 in front of the First Presbyterian Church (now Downtown Presbyterian Church) of Nashville, where they were joined by other Negroes, and transported to Savannah, Georgia. From there, on December 16, 1853, they sailed for Liberia. They apparently were well satisfied, if the sentiment of one old Negro was representative; he asked the ship captain to "write a most loving letter to my old master, and tell him how much we love him, and will never stop thanking the Lord for his goodness to us."¹⁰

The position of the churches on the slavery question is important, since the church, the press, and the schools helped shape the opinions of the ante bellum people. Many of the early antislavery leaders, such as the Emerees, were Quakers, but the Society of Friends was never strong in Tennessee. Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians took strong antislavery positions during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, but from 1830 to 1860 they modified their stands until by the 1850's many preachers in

* The American Colonization Society was formed in Washington in 1817. Its object was the removal to Africa of free Negroes and slaves who might be emancipated.

each of the three groups defended the institution. The shift was not the result of a change of conscience, but rather it represented a position of defense which most Southerners assumed after the vicious abolition attack got under way. In Tennessee, where cotton and slavery were not so vital to the economy as in the lower South, ministers invariably compromised issues. In the lower South, where the preponderance of Baptist slaveholders was exceeded only by the Methodists, slavery was defended with vigor and the opposition was assailed.¹¹

Members of the early Methodist movement in America took a strong antislavery position, almost equivalent to that assumed by the Quakers. John Wesley had spoken against slavery, and Bishop Thomas Coke and his assistant, Francis Asbury, followed in Wesley's footsteps. According to one writer, "The Methodist Episcopal Church was virtually organized into a society for antislavery agitation. . . ." In 1808 the Western Conference met at Liberty Hill near Nashville, and decreed that no member or preacher should buy or sell a slave "unjustly, inhumanely, or covetously." Ministers were not to own slaves. Many did, however, as did Levan Edney, who was appointed to the Nashville circuit in 1812. As a condition to his appointment, Edney was to "set his slave free, when practicable." Presiding Elder James Axley and Circuit-rider Enoch Moore, prominent East Tennessee preachers, took strong antislavery positions, and refused to permit a slaveholding member to lead in public prayer. At the annual Tennessee Conference of 1824, held in Columbia, Methodists decreed that "slavery is an evil to be deplored and that it should be counteracted by every judicious and religious exertion." The influence of the extremists wavered after 1825, however, and for the next two decades the Methodist Church in Tennessee modified its stand on slavery. After the division of 1844-1845, leaders defended it. Peter Cartwright, who had moved to Illinois from Tennessee by the time of the division, condemned those "Methodist preachers, taken from comparative poverty, . . . who preached loudly against" slavery but who, after improving their financial status, "became popular among slaveholding families" and actually owned slaves themselves.¹²

Baptists did not take so strong a position on slavery as did the Methodists. In 1831 the Tennessee Association answered the query, "What ought to be done with a member that sells his colored brother to negro traders to be carried to a distant country against their [*sic*] will?" by advising simply that men should "act agreeable to the Gospel." In 1835 the editor of the Nashville *Baptist*, apparently disturbed by the abolition attack, wrote that "Southerners . . . will dispose of the [slavery] matter as they think properly, all the agitations of the Northerners to the contrary notwithstanding. . . ." After the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 little antislavery sentiment was heard from the Tennessee Baptists.¹³

The Presbyterians took similar positions on the slavery question. The

Cumberland group had been founded in Tennessee in 1810 by the Reverend Finis Ewing, a slaveholder, and others. Ewing emancipated his slaves, took a bold stand against "the traffic in human souls," and announced that he was "determined not to hold, nor to give, nor to sell, nor to buy any slave for life." Three denominational organs, the *Nashville Revivalist*, the *Cumberland Presbyterian*, and the *Theological Medium*, strongly urged humane treatment and gradual emancipation. Members were exhorted to "Teach your slaves to read, and give them moral and religious instruction, and they will not only be better men but better servants. . . . If you would not provoke the God of heaven to entail upon us worse than Egyptian plagues . . . don't withhold from the African religious instruction." In 1848 the General Assembly of the Cumberland Church met in Memphis and assumed a moderate stand on slavery. In response to a position taken by the Pennsylvania Synod in 1847 that slavery "is contrary to the principles of the Gospel . . . and ought to be abolished," members of the Memphis meeting decreed that "any attempt by jurisdictions of the church to agitate the exciting subject of slavery" was wrong, and if persisted in would "gender [*sic*] strife, produce distraction in the church, and thereby hinder the progress of the Gospel." In 1851 the Assembly took a stand which remained its position for the remainder of the slaveholding period:

The church of God is a spiritual body, whose jurisdiction extends only to matters of faith and morals. She has no power to legislate upon subjects on which Christ and his apostles did not legislate, . . . and we are fully persuaded that legislation on that subject [slavery], . . . instead of mitigating the evils . . . will only have a tendency to alienate feeling between the brethren . . .¹⁴

In general, most ministers of the major religious groups compromised issues and accepted what seemed to be a necessary evil. In East Tennessee, where antislavery sentiment was stronger than in the other two sections of the state, lived preachers who assumed the strongest antislavery positions. In areas where the parishioners were poor, backward, and non-slaveholding, invariably the ministers condemned the "rich" slaveowner. Some who despised slavery, as Cartwright, Samuel McAdow and Barton W. Stone, moved to Illinois to escape the influence of what they believed to be the vilest of sins.¹⁵

Frances Wright tried a different approach to the antislavery crusade in Shelby County in the 1820's. The radical Scot reformer visited the United States in 1818 and saw American slavery firsthand. On a later visit she saw its more repugnant aspects and determined to eradicate this "sin against humanity." She was a gradualist who believed that "to give liberty



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

Memphis—Public Library

to a slave before he understands its value, is, perhaps, rather to impose a penalty than to bestow a blessing." She believed that should the Negro undergo a period of education and training he could be raised to the cultural level of the whites and thus become prepared for freedom. She proposed to purchase Negroes and establish them in a colony where they might work and thus earn the costs of their purchase and transportation to some place outside the United States. Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe, all of whom had worked to rid the country of slavery, encouraged her.¹⁶

In the autumn of 1825 Miss Wright purchased 1,940 acres on either side of the Wolf River, about thirteen miles northeast of Memphis, named the vast estate "Nashoba" (a Chickasaw word for "wolf"), and sought a small contingent of blacks on which she might perform her "noble" experiment. Negroes soon arrived from a variety of sources. Eight were purchased in Nashville. Robert Wilson, a South Carolina planter, donated a Negro mother and five small children. Others were bought in the vicinity of the colony. In the spring of 1826 land was cleared for corn and cotton, and an

apple orchard was planted, but before the crops were harvested Miss Wright became ill. In the following spring she returned to Europe. The colony was left in charge of her sister, Camilla Wright, and a board of ten trustees which included General LaFayette,* Robert Dale Owen, and James Richardson.¹⁷

The colony had little chance for success from the beginning; Miss Wright's departure coupled with her poor choice of associates—James Richardson and Richeson Whitby in particular—brought its downfall. Communications of Richardson to Benjamin Lundy indicate that at the time of her departure all was not going well at the colony.¹⁸ As information of free love, loose morals, racial equality, and amalgamation came to be known, West Tennesseans threatened fire and destruction. The Nashoba group, always verbose, defended themselves eloquently, and Frances Wright returned to add her voice to their support. She determined to abandon the project, however, after she had observed the gross mismanagement which had taken place during her absence. She resolved to take her Negroes to Haiti. Chartering her own ship, she accompanied them to the Haitian shores where they were received by the governor and given land.¹⁹

Before 1831 the antislavery sentiment in America had been mild and restrained. Northern men such as Daniel Webster, William Ellery Channing, and James Russell Lowell directed their appeal for emancipation *to* the slaveholder rather than *against* him. With the first issue of William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* (January 1, 1831), however, a new leader and a new theory appeared. Garrison, and those who flocked to him later, accepted an extreme, radical point of view. They wanted immediate, uncompensated emancipation, and if it became necessary to sacrifice Southern slaveholders upon the altar of freedom in the process, they were not averse to that. Garrison's salutatory address was concluded with the oft-quoted words: "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!" The Constitution of the United States he denounced as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell," and when a copy of it was burned publicly, the fiery editor wrote, "So perish all compromisers with tyranny!" The attitude expressed by the Garrison group served to nullify efforts at emancipation and caused Southerners to develop a defense of slavery rather than to consider it as an evil which in due course must be eradicated. Whether or not their work was meritorious depends upon one's point of view, but this is certain: they helped to unite the Southern mind on a thing which many people south of the Mason-Dixon line did not want—a strong defense of slavery.²⁰

Fear inspired Tennesseans to tighten their grip on slavery during the three

* She had become acquainted with LaFayette after her first voyage to America in 1818. She later visited him at his home in Paris, and later accompanied him on a trip to America.

decades before the war. There were rumors, many unfounded, of slave insurrections. The economic chaos and bloody massacre of the whites after slaves were emancipated in Santo Domingo (1791-1795), Gabriel's Insurrection in Virginia (1800), and the plot of Denmark Vesey in Charleston (1822) were known to Tennesseans.* The editor of the Maryville *Intelligencer* believed that southern whites were "emphatically surrounded . . . by a dangerous class of beings—degraded, stupid savages, who would repeat Santo Domingo. . . ." A series of revolts occurred in 1831 and 1832. In Virginia the Nat Turner insurrection was quelled only after more than one hundred people—whites and blacks—had been slain. Four slaves were hanged following a riot in North Carolina, and insurrections were reported in Delaware, Georgia, Tennessee, and other slaveholding states. In 1832 slaves at Fayetteville plotted to burn buildings, seize guns, and "commence a general massacre." When a female slave reported the Lincoln County plot to authorities, the leaders were apprehended and soundly whipped.²¹

When Tennessee legislators convened in the autumn of 1831 they were in no mood to take further chances with the Negro population, despite the fact that many rumors of slave insurrections were greatly exaggerated. One enactment forbade all unlawful assemblages of slaves "in unusual numbers" or at "suspicious times and places." If Negroes assembled anyway and refused to disperse upon orders from a sheriff or patroller, the offenders received twenty-five lashes. Powers and responsibilities of the patrol were expanded. Another law forbade the immigration of free Negroes, and prohibited emancipation unless the freedmen were taken outside the state. Courts were given discretionary powers to punish "conspiracy to rebel" as they saw fit; the death penalty could be given.²²

The arrest of Amos Dresser, a member of the American Anti-Slavery Society accused of distributing antislavery pamphlets in Nashville, was the probable reason for a statute passed in 1836. The law forbade the distribution of abolition literature of any type. Offenders could be imprisoned for a period of five to ten years for the first offense and from ten to twenty for the second.²³

In 1833 Senator Edward B. Littlefield, of Maury County, opposed a bill which would repeal the law requiring slaveowners who emancipated their Negroes to remove them from the state. To repeal the law, Littlefield believed, would "bring

* "General" Gabriel Prosser organized blacks at Richmond and determined to take and destroy the city. The plan was frustrated before it reached fruition and led to the creation of a standing army at the Virginia capital and a movement to colonize free Negroes on the Western frontier. In 1822 Vesey, a talented and successful free Negro preacher, organized a formidable conspiracy among slaves at Charleston. He was betrayed by one of his erstwhile supporters and was hanged, along with thirty-four of his followers.

** Similar laws were passed in other states. In North Carolina a statute was enacted prohibiting Negroes from assembling for any purpose at night; the legislature in South Carolina declared abolition societies subversive to the Union, and the Virginia assembly sought the suppression of all abolition societies.

upon us the scenes of St. Domingo and Southampton."* Although he did not approve of "robbing Africa of her children, and reducing them to servitude," still he believed that "a difference of color" forever would preclude the African from living among whites on a basis of equality. He said that Africa must be "enlightened and Christianized," and that the work could be done by former American slaves working under the supervision of the American Colonization Society. Only persons like "a Mr. Garrison, a Mr. Lundy, and others like them" opposed such a move, he asserted.²⁴

Fear of insurrection and a tightening of the grip on slavery still further is evident in the constitutional convention of 1834. We mentioned in an earlier chapter that the right of suffrage was taken away from the free Negro by the convention. Numerous petitions seeking abolition of slavery were submitted but had little effect upon the delegates. John A. M'Kinney, delegate from Hawkins County, was named chairman of a committee to draft a reply to the petitioners and to explain why the memorials could not be considered. In a well written report M'Kinney deplored slavery in the abstract sense, but as to how it might be removed he said that the "wisest heads and the most benevolent hearts have not been able to answer in a satisfactory manner." He believed that "fleecy locks and black complexion mark every one of the African race so long as he remains among white men, as a person doomed to dwell in the suburbs of society, after he is free as much as when he was a slave. . . ." If any attempt were made to emancipate them many masters would take their slaves to other slaveholding states, he believed. To emancipate them and leave them in Tennessee was unthinkable; they would become public charges or even might revolt—the "bloody scenes of St. Domingo" were not forgotten. He was convinced that

if misguided fanatics, in those parts of the United States where slavery does not now exist, will only refrain from intermeddling in a matter in which they have no concern and in which their interference can do no possible good and may do much positive evil, slavery, with all its ills, will be extinguished as certainly and as speedily as the friends of humanity have any reason to expect. For let it be remembered, that there is an appropriate time for every work beneath the sun; and a premature attempt to do any work, particularly any great work, seldom fails to prevent success. . . .

"Great mischief," he believed, "may be done by raising expectations in any class of the community, which cannot be realized. . . ."²⁵

W. H. Loving, delegate to the convention from Haywood and Tipton coun-

* The "scenes of Southampton" referred to the Nat Turner insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia, which transpired in August, 1831. Turner, a demented slave preacher who had "seen" visions of black and white angels in combat, had resolved to lead an attack on whites. Over sixty white persons and many Negroes were slaughtered.

ties, believed that an "Almighty hand" had "fixed upon the negro race, a color of an indelible hue, and pronounced upon Ham [from whom it is believed the Negro race had its origin] . . . the curse, 'A servant of servants shall he be.'"²⁶

Delegates of the convention made a decision similar to that made by Virginians in 1831-1832, and in other slaveholding states. They agreed that slavery was the only practical solution to the race problem as long as the Negro was a part of the social order.²⁷

Moderation characterized the proslavery argument in Tennessee. Perhaps the editor of the Nashville *Whig* in 1841 wrote the sentiments of a majority of the people:

We have nothing to say in favor of negro slavery. . . . We would gladly be freed of them if we knew how. To free them and let them remain among us would aggravate the evil greatly. We would most willingly turn them over to our Yankee bretheren [*sic*], if they would take them away and guarantee their good behavior. . . . We make their condition as comfortable as their situation will permit.²⁸

Despite the occasional threat of revolt, Tennesseans apparently did not fear the Negroes as they did the obnoxious abolitionists. Seldom did they write of abolitionists except in harsh terms. In 1836, for example, the editor of the Randolph *Recorder* excoriated some "unknown dastard of an Abolitionist" who had written an anonymous letter to a Tennessee legislator in condemnation of slavery. Two years later the publisher of the Randolph *Whig* refused to exchange subscriptions with Garrison's *Emancipator*, which the *Whig* editor described as a "cut-throat piece of impudence." One of the most violent haters of abolitionists was William G. Brownlow. In 1858, in a debate with the Reverend Abram Pryne, the parson told his Philadelphia audience that abolitionists had created such a tense situation that Southerners were forced to sleep with pistols under their pillows. Fear of a Negro uprising pervaded every slaveholding area of the South, and Brownlow was convinced that if ever "blood is shed in the South it will be by our negroes." For the unrest he blamed the "blue-bellied Yankees and unmitigated Northern Yankee abolitionists," and predicted that if a Northern army ever invaded the South it would be at the instigation of the abolitionists. Slavery was here to stay, the fiery East Tennessean said, and exclaimed that

if [Pryne's] great-grandchildren live to see American Slavery eradicated from the States South, where it now is by the sanction of law and the provision of our constitution, as well as with the approbation of God himself, they will live until their heads are as grey as a Norwegian rat.²⁹

As the abolition attack increased in bitterness, leading Southerners formulated a defense of slavery, their section, and their way of life. Scholars have written of a three-fold defensive argument: scriptural, in which Southerners showed that



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Nashville—State Library and Archives Building

slaves were held by Hebraic patriarchs and by many people living while Christ was on earth, yet no condemnation of slavery could be found in either the Old or the New Testament;* economic, in which they argued that the Negro as an American slave was an “economic good” but was of no value even to himself as a free man in Africa; and social, in which they showed that Negroes were not ready for a white man’s civilization and that whites and blacks could never live peaceably side by side in a status of social equality. The Santo Domingo massacre generally was cited as an example of the latter.³⁰

Still another line of argument was developed in the mid-1850’s by Josiah Clark Nott, a Mobile physician, who collaborated with George B. Gliddon in 1854 to

* “There is not a single passage in the New Testament . . . of . . . censure of slavery,” Parson Brownlow wrote in 1861. “The original church of Christ not only admitted the lawfulness of slavery, but . . . expressed her approbation of it Brownlow, *Sketches of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Secession; with a Narrative of Personal Adventures among the Rebels* (Philadelphia, 1862), 108.

produce a work on ethnology entitled *Types of Mankind*. The authors argued that the Negro and the white man were separately created species. The Negro was of an order inferior to the white, and while an improved diet and environment in America had caused him to show vast improvement over his African forebears, such could not change him into a white man. "Wild horses, cattle, asses, and other brutes are greatly improved in like manner by domestication: but neither climate nor food can transmute an ass into a horse, or a buffalo into an ox," they concluded.³¹

The work went through ten editions and was embraced by many people, despite obvious fallacies in the authors' arguments which more recent studies in anthropology have been able to show. Its influence was felt in the Medical Department of the University of Nashville, and two young medical students expounded upon the topic in their dissertations written to fulfill requirements for the degree of Doctor of Medicine. In 1855 Theo Westmoreland, of Pulaski, earned an M. D. degree after submitting a dissertation entitled "The Anatomical and Physiological Differences in the Ethiopian and the White Man." Westmoreland observed that the Negro cranium differed from that of the white man in that it was "much thicker, more compact, and depressed over the top." This resulted in "a smaller cavity for the brain." The Negro brain was "not near so well developed" as that of the white man, weighed from two to three ounces less, and measured "less by one-sixth." Anatomists in every part of the country "fully demonstrated" that fact by "actual dissection." The tissue of the brain and the entire nervous system was much coarser than those of whites. The peculiar Negro odor—"so peculiar that when onced [*sic*] smelt will always be recognized"—did not escape Westmoreland's scrutiny. He believed that "an unknown substance" was secreted from the Negro skin, giving it the "peculiar" odor which even the dirtiest white man did not have. Westmoreland asserted that "sexual precosity [*sic*]" and "moral degenerosity [*sic*]" characterized "this wooly [*sic*] headed tribe." "Lewdness . . . [was] the most predominant feature . . . and a total indifference to the regulations of virtuous principles" characterized all, he asserted. The young doctor was convinced that his and other research "will in all probability give a quietus to Some of our Modern Selfstyled Philanthropists who contend for an equality of mankind."³²

Three years later a second University of Nashville medical student, Newton C. Miller, sought further to substantiate Westmoreland's conclusions. His dissertation, written for the Doctor of Medicine degree, was entitled "The Diversity of the Human Species." The contents of his dissertation, as well as his citations, indicate that he was quite familiar with the work of Nott and Gliddon. According to Miller, the idea that "all the human family . . . descended from one origin was absurd and opposed to all scientific investigation. . . ." The differences between the Negro and the white man offered the best example of the diversity, he believed. The differences were so pronounced "as utterly to forbid the idea of their having sprung from one

origin." The Negro's flat head and flat and blunt nose were most apparent differences. Among others were "the nasal apertures, the internal cavities of the nose, the external meatus of the ear, and the orbital cavities, [which] are all larger in the Negro than the white man." When the Negro's hair was placed under a microscope it appeared "excentrically [*sic*] elliptical or flat," while that of the white man was cylindrical. Miller observed that it was "the almost universal custom" of the Negro to cover his head while sleeping, thus shutting out fresh air. This deprived the brain of its necessary supply of oxygen and was a partial cause for the weakness of the Negro mind. But the main reason why Negroes made no worthwhile contributions of an intellectual nature was that God had created them as an inferior species.

Who is the wooly [*sic*] head that has commanded the admiration of the world by the masterly policy with which he has conducted a nation on to power and prosperity? [Miller asked.] Where are the kinky headed Demosthenes or Ciceros who have electrified large audiences . . . with their eloquence? Where are the flat nosed Websters, Clays, and Calhouns whose effusions . . . afford the most perfect models of oratory and logic extant? Where will you look for the flat footed Story or Taney? . . . They have never appeared upon the earth, nor shall they until the Creator shall by his omnipotent fiat endow the negro with a new physical constitution. Abolitionists and negro sympathisers [*sic*] may assert the equality of the negro and the white man but stubborn facts will ever prove the falsity of the assertions.

These conclusions, amusing today in the light of modern anthropological knowledge, were accepted by many people throughout the country.³³

Considerable uneasiness was aroused in the minds of slaveholders during the late 1850's, and additional rumors of slave insurrections spread. Unrest throughout the South caused a strengthening of the patrol. Widespread fear was reported in 1856, and plots were discovered in several Middle and West Tennessee counties. A Fayette County owner overheard slaves plotting insurrection and promptly had fifty-five of them thrown in jail. Two kegs of powder were discovered in possession of slaves near Columbia. Uprisings were reported also in Franklin and Perry counties. In the latter a general panic resulted and slaveowners killed a dozen Negroes. In Nashville the patrol was strengthened, Negro schools and churches temporarily forbidden to operate, and all Negro assemblages after sundown prohibited. The people of Montgomery and Stewart counties were described as "perhaps the most terror-stricken community of the entire South." These counties comprised the iron center of Middle Tennessee, and the Negro population of iron workers outnumbered the whites. At Louisa Furnace in Montgomery County, a keg of powder was found under a church. Nearby, a Negro named Britton was heard haranguing a group of blacks—presumably inciting them to insurrection—and upon his failure to obey an overseer's order to desist, he was shot. According to a Nashville newspaper,

the slaves were organized as "generals" and "captains" and planned an insurrection on Christmas Day, 1856, at which time they would march on Clarksville, capture the town, plunder its banks, and then flee to free territory in the North. Ironmasters throughout the vicinity were notified by the Clarksville city council on December 17 that no visiting slave would be permitted to remain in the town for more than two hours unless accompanied by a "responsible white person." According to a report from nearby Christian County, Kentucky, Negroes had "united and are marching toward Dover and were within eight miles of that place when last heard from. Their intention is to relieve the negroes at Dover . . . and then march on to Hopkinsville and the Ohio River." The plot was discovered before violence erupted, however, and distraught whites filled the jails with black suspects and hanged others. At least five Negroes were killed by a mob, and dozens of others were hanged on orders of the courts. Other uprisings were reported from time to time. In 1859 two of Mrs. James Knox Polk's slaves were tried and condemned to execution for plotting insurrection.³⁴

The ruthless manner in which proposed insurrections were put down indicates the extent to which fear gripped the minds of some people. By the close of the slaveholding period exaggerated tales of proposed slave uprisings were heard in every Southern state. That the radical press used the incidents to drive a wedge between the North and South there can be little doubt.³⁵

By the 1850's Tennesseans were defending an institution which earlier they had tried to eradicate. While a few emancipationists like Ezekiel Birdseye of Newport continued to work for peaceful abolition, such men were few in East Tennessee and could scarcely be found in the central and western divisions. Congressman John Savage spoke the sentiments of many people in 1850 when he exclaimed in the halls of Congress that he was "ready for war, subjugation, or extinction" before he would turn slaves "loose among us, to be our equals." Negroes would "disgust" whites "by their vices," "insult" them "by their insolence," and "degrade" their "name and posterity by a vile commingling of races. . . ." Before this should occur Savage prayed that "the ocean's wave might blot us from the world. . . ." When secession came many people viewed the situation as did Parson Brownlow, who described himself as a proslavery man who hated secession and who blamed the abolitionists for the unhappy condition in which the American people now found themselves.³⁶

The Compromise of 1850 and the Nashville (Southern) Convention—In 1846, shortly before negotiations with Mexico were opened whereby the United States acquired the territory known as the Mexican Cession, David Wilmot of Pennsylvania attached to an appropriations measure a rider stipulating that slavery should be excluded from all territory acquired from Mexico. The measure, successful in the House but failing in the Senate, gave a new impetus to the slavery controversy. Southerners had borne the brunt of the Mexican War (which was another "real

estate" war), and Wilmot's attempt to exclude slaveholders from the newly-gained lands raised a storm of protest from the people south of the Mason-Dixon line. The Tennessee senate (like legislative bodies of other slaveholding states) agreed unanimously that "This Legislature is opposed to the 'Wilmot Proviso' in every shape and form. . . ." Senators believed that the adoption of the measure "would produce great discord in our union; and that no possible good will ever grow out of it." Whigs and Democrats alike deplored it and shared President Polk's comment that it was a "mischievous and foolish amendment."³⁷

When the state Democratic Convention assembled in 1849 in Nashville, passions were aroused to fever heat. Delegates called for "a firm declaration of our purpose to resist the encroachments of northern fanaticism . . ." and believed necessity demanded that "all the citizens . . . as they value their dearest privileges, their sovereignty, their independence, [and] their rights of property . . . take firm, united and concerted action in this emergency." In case Congress should enact the Wilmot Proviso, Tennessee Democrats were ready "heart and soul, with a united front," to join the other Southern states "in taking such measures for the vindication of our rights, and the preservation of ourselves and those whom we hold dear, as the highest wisdom of all may, through a southern convention or otherwise, suggest and advise." The United States government had no right to impair the rights of the slaveholder, they asserted; to do so "transcends the limits of its legitimate functions."³⁸

The success of their gubernatorial candidate, William Trousdale, caused Democrats to attribute victory to their strong stand on state's rights.* A better explanation, however, was that the "Warhorse of Sumner County" had been a military hero—a qualification which the American people even to this day apparently find to be an irresistible argument for election to public office.

A Southern convention, as mentioned by the Democrats, was already in the making. A caucus of sixty-nine Southern Congressmen had been held in December, 1848, to protest against the Wilmot Proviso and to seek some plan to avert dangers which seemed ominously to threaten the Southern states. Calhoun had been a leader in the movement, and Senator Hopkins L. Turney of Tennessee had attended and also signed (with others from the South) an "Address to the People of the Southern States." The caucus and the "Address" included a plea for unity in the resistance of Northern encroachments; the "Address" was published generally throughout the South. In 1849 leaders in Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Missouri, Tennessee, and other slaveholding states voiced desires for a "southern convention" at which their common problems might be discussed. In October of that year a group of Mississippians, meeting to "consider the threatening relations between the North

* Trousdale defeated the incumbent, Neill S. Brown, by about fourteen hundred votes. Brown was appointed minister to Russia the following February. See Joseph O. Baylen, "A Tennessee Politician in Imperial Russia," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* XIV (September, 1955), 227-52.

and South," called on the people of the South to send delegates to Nashville the following June so that plans for arresting further aggression might be made. The chief purpose of the meeting was understood to be "the presentation of a united protest from the South against the attempt to exclude southern men with their slaves from the national territories which had recently been won from Mexico."³⁹

The Tennessee press at first endorsed the meeting, and the Nashville *Republican Banner* promised members "a welcome in our midst." Both Whigs and Democrats apparently recognized in it a means of voicing the united protests of the South, and no taint of disunion was apparent. Before the members convened, however, Tennessee Whigs strongly opposed the meeting, and through their control of the senate they blocked Democratic hopes of having delegates appointed by the legislature. By March the Whig press was unfavorable, and the editor of the *Daily Republican Banner* told "the plotters to assemble elsewhere!" Tennessee should not be a "stamping-ground" for seceders and nullifiers, he asserted.⁴⁰

A strong reason for Whigs cooling toward the idea was that in January, 1850, Henry Clay—still an idol of Tennessee Whigs—introduced in Congress a series of measures which became the Compromise of 1850. Clay's proposals would settle many sectional issues by providing for the admission of California with its free-state constitution; the creation of a territorial government for the remainder of the Mexican Cession without restriction as to slavery; compensation to Texas for relinquishing claim to a considerable part of New Mexico; abolition of the slave trade but not slavery in the District of Columbia; and the enactment of a more effective fugitive slave law. President Taylor despised Clay, and in the meantime had come under the influence of the radical abolitionist Senator, William H. Seward. These conditions, coupled with the fact that the Clay compromise proposals were not warmly received in either North or South, caused John Bell to sound out "at least a dozen honorable Senators" and present a plan of his own.⁴¹

Bell would admit California as a free state, but henceforth no territory should be permitted to frame a constitution, either free or slave, without the consent of Congress. To retain the balance of power* Bell proposed that a new slave state should be carved from Texas which would balance California as a free state. The Tennessee Senator admitted that this would not be a permanent solution, for he could foresee at least ten new free states carved from the territories within the next decade, but it would, he claimed, constitute a temporary stop-gap measure. A suitable government without restrictions as to slavery should be framed for the rest of the Mexican Cession later.⁴²

The various proposals were submitted to a special committee of thirteen, which

* Since the time of the Missouri Compromise, it had been the custom of the Congress to admit a slave state for each free state. The North had control of the House of Representatives because of its superiority in population. The South, however, could retain a "balance of power" in the Senate so long as equality was maintained in the number of states.

included Clay, Bell, Daniel Webster, and ten others equally divided between the Northern and Southern states. Bell's Texas proposal was doomed when the committee reported on May 8 its recommendations substantially the same as Clay's resolutions.⁴³

For months the best talent in Congress freely argued every phase of the compromise proposals. Several Tennesseans spoke on the measure, although none of course compared with Webster, Calhoun, Clay, Douglas and perhaps others who took more prominent parts. Bell pursued an uncertain and vacillating course, although he did present a three-day argument. One observer noted that "On the first day of . . . [Bell's speech] people in the galleries said, 'Bell is for it.' On the second day they said, 'Bell will vote against it.' On the third that he 'cannot make up his mind.'" General Winfield Scott believed that the Senator from Tennessee; still considered a presidential or a vice presidential possibility, had "lost ground with Northern whigs, by speaking a little on both sides" of the proposals.⁴⁴

The other Tennessee Senator, Democrat Hopkins L. Turney, pursued the argument which Calhoun and other Southerners had followed. He said that Congress could legislate for the territories only in accordance with the Constitution, which did not give Congress power to restrict or abolish slavery in the territories. He denied the legitimacy of California's constitution and declared that it had been written by squatters. He excoriated Seward for his "higher law"* doctrine, which, according to Turney, "discards the constitution" and repudiates its "binding force." Seward, he believed, was worse than William L. Garrison, for the New York Senator had taken an oath to support the Constitution. Turney was convinced that Seward would "invoke the aid of Great Britain, or of any other Power, for the purpose of prostrating or tearing down this Union."⁴⁵

Most of the Tennessee congressmen also were heard. Isham G. Harris, later to become the state's Civil War governor, argued strongly against the Compromise. Like Turney, he believed that Congress had no power to legislate on slavery in the territories. "Congress is the creature of the Constitution . . .," he said, "having no powers except such as are expressly delegated by that instrument. . . ." He argued against the admission of California as a free state, claiming that its constitution was formed, "not by actual settlers but by gloating gold diggers . . . [who] are in no way identified with the country." He deprecated the threats of Northern extremists, exclaiming that "there is no power except the arm of Omnipotence that can hold a free, a gallant, and an unwilling people together." He then called for a return "to that spirit of concession . . . and mutual respect for the rights, interest, and feelings of the people and every section. . . ." John Savage excoriated "Fred Douglas [*sic*], Mr. Greeley [*sic*] and other free negroes [?] of the North." He urged a return to constitutional principles, and declared that if this "foundation" were destroyed, "the mighty structure of the Union . . . falls and crumbles into ruins. . . ." Democrats

* Seward contended that, although the Constitution did authorize slavery, a "higher law" of moral conscience impelled men to free their fellow man from bondage.

Andrew Johnson and James H. Thomas agreed that the Constitution was in jeopardy and must be maintained. Johnson called upon Southerners to accept any reasonable adjustment and urged them to unite and take a "stand against the encroachments of the North . . . upon southern institutions, and thereby save the Constitution from violation, and the States from dismemberment." Whig Representatives Meredith P. Gentry and Christopher H. Williams took more moderate stands and defended Clay and President Taylor.⁴⁶

The various measures were voted upon separately. Bell supported all except the one providing for the prohibition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, and Turney opposed all except the provision for a more stringent fugitive slave law. The Tennessee delegation in the House voted unanimously in favor of the settlement of the Texas boundary question and for the more effective fugitive slave bill. On the other issues they were divided. On the measure providing for the admission of California as a free state, Whigs Bell, Williams and Albert G. Watkins, and Democrats Johnson and George W. Jones, voted affirmatively. On the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, both Senators were against it, but a majority of the House members voted for it.⁴⁷

In the meantime members of the Nashville Convention met on June 3 and concluded their session nine days later. Local groups had proceeded to elect delegates after state legislators had cooled toward the meeting and decided that the selection of delegates was not a "part of their delegated trusts." Many of the counties selected several representatives so that when the session opened, Tennessee had approximately one hundred delegates. Among the number were such prominent figures as Aaron V. Brown, A. O. P. Nicholson, Gideon J. Pillow, William Polk, and Thomas Claiborne.⁴⁸

The proceedings of the Convention were harmonious on the main subjects under consideration. Except for preparing for publication certain resolutions and providing for another meeting of delegates "on the sixth Monday after Congress adjourned," little was done. The thirteen resolutions, briefly summarized, were as follows:

The states have equal rights in the territories, have absolute equality among themselves, and can settle their own domestic relations and shape their own policy towards slavery;

The Wilmot Proviso is unconstitutional;

The North must enforce the fugitive slave law;

The controversy with regard to the Mexican Cession territory must be settled, either by a recognition of the "Constitutional rights of the Southern people, or by an equitable partition of the territories." A suggestion was made that the Missouri Compromise line would be sufficient.

No threat of secession was made, but all could see where the South stood.⁴⁹

The state Democratic press defended the meeting, while Whig editors opposed

it. The editor of the Nashville *Daily American* admired the "temperate and mild yet firm and unyielding" attitude displayed by the members. "They claimed but equal rights," the editor asserted. The Nashville *True Whig*, however, believed the meeting to be "dangerous," and "had no sympathy with the movement." The editor of the Nashville *Republican Banner* was equally denunciatory.⁵⁰

A second session was called for November 11, 1850. To most Tennesseans and to many Southerners such a meeting seemed absurd. Moderates were willing to test the Compromise of 1850 before resorting to rash action. Nevertheless, "shorn of numbers and strength"—only fourteen Tennesseans attended—the Convention re-assembled on the stipulated date. The editor of the Memphis *Eagle* saw no moderates among the members, but only "out and out secessionists . . . who want to . . . make . . . capital upon an unfortunate sectional agitation."⁵¹

Delegates from practically all represented states offered resolutions. Langdon Cheves of South Carolina believed that secession was the only remedy and spoke for two hours in favor of it; delegates from Georgia took a similar position. Representatives from Tennessee sought "to stem the tide of radicalism" and presented, with Pillow and Brown as spokesmen, the "Tennessee Resolutions." In a two-hour speech Brown vilified the recent Congress which had "deluded and defrauded" Southerners of the "mighty domain [which] was subdued by the valor of her gallant but now rejected people." He differentiated the "real" Union from the one now dominated by the North. To the latter, which would "deprive" him "of his property," "beggar" his children, "fire" his dwelling, and spread around him "all the horrors of a servile war," he exclaimed, "By Heavens, I owe it no allegiance!" But despite the wrongs and insults heaped upon the South by the abolitionists and Northern-dominated Congress, Brown exclaimed that his heart would not "beat one pulse the less of ardent devotion to the Constitution and the [real] Union." He urged delegates to forget past wrongs—"the past can be endured"—but to strive to bind up the nation's wounds and preserve the Union and the Constitution.⁵²

The Tennesseans were in the minority, however, and the states voted six to one to adopt stronger resolutions. The group "earnestly recommended" that another Southern convention be held later "with a view and intention of arresting further aggression, and if possible of restoring the constitutional rights of the South, and if not to provide for their safety and independence." The moderate position, nevertheless, was upheld generally in the South. Most Southerners—especially Tennesseans and others of the border states—wished to adopt a "wait and see" attitude with regard to the Compromise of 1850 and refused to support the Convention position. John Bell expressed the sentiments of many when in the autumn of 1850 he spoke to constituents as follows:

The crisis is not past; nor can perfect harmony be restored to the country until the North shall cease to vex the South upon the subject of slavery. . . . I am no ultraist, and favor no extreme measures. A spirit of conciliation and



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

Crossville

forbearance is demanded by patriotism and the exigencies of the times, as well on the part of the South, as on that of the North; but there is a difference between a policy dictated by a spirit of forbearance and *quietism*, which may seem to approve, and would, inevitably, invite aggression.⁵³

Election of 1851—With the ghost of sectional strife at least temporarily laid, Tennesseans now turned to the gubernatorial contest of 1851. Each party was particularly desirous of winning both the governorship and control of the legislature, because the victor would name a United States Senator and also redistrict the state on the basis of the census returns of 1850. A “united Democracy” nominated Trousdale for a second term. Despite his protests, Circuit Judge William B. Campbell, a hero of the Mexican War, was drafted by Whigs at the insistence of John Bell and other party leaders. Several years earlier, on two occasions the candidates had been pitted against each other in congressional races, and Campbell had been victorious in both contests.⁵⁴

The Compromise of 1850 was the main issue in the campaign. Trousdale reluctantly accepted the measure, but believed it to be oppressive and unjust to the South. The fugitive slave law, which was supposed to be the chief gain for the South, was entirely unnecessary because of the constitutional provisions and the law of 1793. He termed as "slander" the Whig allegations that he was a disunionist and accused Campbell and his party of being "too favorable to northern views and feelings. . . ." Campbell, however, saw in the Compromise "the work of the wisdom and patriotism of the country, in a great crisis of sectional agitation." The people of the North, he believed, would abide by the provisions of the Constitution, but if they did not, he still did not favor secession "for a few negroes and a few worthless white men." He believed Trousdale's arguments weakened popular confidence in the Compromise in both the North and the South. Campbell became ill in McMinnville and was unable to make a thorough canvas, but his place on the stump was taken by Thomas A. R. Nelson and other prominent Whigs.⁵⁵

Despite his absence from the platform, Campbell was elected by a majority of 1,660 votes.* The largest number of voters in the history of the state had participated. Jubilant Whigs also secured control of both houses of the legislature.⁵⁶

The new Governor in his inaugural address promised "moderation and firmness," lauded President Fillmore for his adherence to the Compromise, and urged Tennesseans to forget sectional strife. "Idle" and "insane" talk about peaceable dissolution of the Union should cease, he said. "Civil war will inevitably and naturally follow. . . . Should one State prove successful, others would seek to follow the example, and, in the course of time, we should probably have thirty or more petty republics, wrangling and quarreling and fighting. . . ."⁵⁷

Whigs were confident of their ability to elect a United States Senator, but they had considerable difficulty in deciding upon which party member to confer the honor. The choice appeared to be between former Governor James C. Jones, then a Memphis businessman, and Thomas A. R. Nelson of East Tennessee. Finally, in secret caucus, Jones was selected over Nelson by one vote. This insured his victory, and he defeated former Governor Trousdale by a vote of 55 to 38. He was the first Senator to hail from West Tennessee.⁵⁸

The legislative redistricting committee consisted of ten Whigs and five Democrats, with Gustavus A. Henry, of Clarksville, as chairman. They took pains to gerrymander some counties to assure Whig majorities in Congress and in the legislature. Since 1843 Andrew Johnson had controlled the first district. He had defeated such Whig stalwarts as Oliver P. Temple and Nathaniel G. Taylor, although by very slim margins, and Whigs determined to defeat him in 1853. However, as we shall discuss later, they pushed him out of the first district and into the governor's chair.⁵⁹

The state's relation to the federal government still was an unsettled and trou-

* The vote was: Campbell, 63,333, and Trousdale, 61,673. *Senate Journal*, 1851, p. 59; *House Journal*, 1851, p. 54.

blous question. A Committee on Federal Relations was appointed which, after much debate, drafted resolutions in an attempt to define Tennessee's position. Democrats were in favor of asserting that the Compromise fell "short of that measure of justice to which the South . . . are [*sic*] fairly entitled." Whigs prevailed, however, and adopted a resolution in which Northern "abolitionists and fanatics" were condemned and Tennesseans were described as people who cherished "an abiding devotion to the Union and Constitution." Whigs further stated that the Compromise was the best "which under the circumstances," could have been adopted, and that it represented a final settlement of the "dangerous and exciting subjects" which they embraced; that the Constitution did not recognize the right of secession, and that the state would aid the President in executing the constitutional laws of the United States; that the people of Tennessee recognized the right of revolution when "palpably, intolerably, and unconstitutionally oppressed by the Government of the United States"; and that in a spirit of "hope and kindness" Tennessee warned "her sister States of the North" that "any modification" of the fugitive slave bill, or failure to enforce it would "tend to a train of deplorable consequences, from which a dissolution of the Union will be the most probable result."⁶⁰

Whigs had become confused in 1849-1850 when Scott, under the influence of Seward, had not given his unconditional support to the Compromise. Dissension in the party continued and was still to be found in the presidential election of 1852. The selection of Winfield Scott brought about the beginning of the dissolution of the party, if it had not begun already. Gentry joined a bloc known as the "Southern Whigs," and Brownlow stated widely that he believed the national unity of the party was destroyed. Bell had been strongly mentioned as a possible vice presidential nominee with Scott, and, although Whigs chose another, Bell gave the ticket unqualified support, as did the other Senator, James C. Jones. Gentry, Christopher H. Williams, and other Whigs, however, repudiated the candidate. Nelson and most party leaders gave support reluctantly.⁶¹

Despite the division in the Tennessee Whigs, Scott carried the state by a bare 1,900 vote majority. For the last time the Whigs won a major popular election in Tennessee. The victory did little to unite them, however, and even Bell admitted three months after the election that he saw "signs of a more decisive breaking up of . . . [the] party in Tennessee in the next election than . . . [he] had seen at any time heretofore."⁶²

CHAPTER XXIV—NOTES

1. See Alice D. Adams, *The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery in America, 1808-1831* (Boston, 1908), and Arthur Young Lloyd, *The Slavery Controversy, 1831-1860* (Chapel Hill, 1939), Chapter 1; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 456.
2. Robert H. White, "Elihu Embree, Agitator and Abolitionist," in a reprint of *The Emancipator*, by B. H. Murphy (Nashville, 1932), v.
3. William B. Hesseltine, "Some New Aspects of Pro-Slavery Arguments," *Journal of Negro History*, XXI (January, 1936) 8; Edward B. Landis, "The Influence of Ten-

- nesseans in the Formation of Illinois," *Illinois Historical Society Transactions*, 1933 (Springfield, 1933), 133-34; Stephen B. Weeks, *Southern Quakers and Slavery* (Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, XV, Baltimore, 1896), 235-36; *The Emancipator*, April, May, 1820; Asa Earl Martin, "The Anti-Slavery Societies of Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine* (December, 1915), 262-66.
4. *Ibid.*, 266; quotation in Adams, *Neglected Period*, 132; Chase C. Mooney, "Some Institutional and Statistical Aspects of Slavery in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (September, 1942), 203.
5. *Emancipator*, June, 1820; Martin, "Anti-Slavery Societies," 267; "Pioneer Anti-Slavery Press," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, II (March, 1916), 514 ff.
6. Mooney, *Slavery in Tennessee*, 68-69; Martin, "Anti-Slavery Societies," 264, 268; Adams, *Neglected Period*, 131.
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10. Mooney, *Slavery in Tennessee*, 75; James H. McNeilly, *Religion and Slavery* (Nashville, 1911), 19; Dorsey L. Castleman, "Story of Christopher Strong, Revolutionary Soldier, Citizen," *Dickson County Herald*, September 27, 1946; newspaper clippings and other papers among Henry C. Leech Papers, in private possession.
11. Posey, *Baptists*, 89; *Methodism*, 96, *et passim*.
12. Asa Earl Martin, "Anti-Slavery Activities of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, II (June, 1916), 99; Posey, *Methodism*, 96; John B. McFerrin, *History of Methodism in Tennessee* (3 vols., Nashville, 1869), II, 243, 261, 494-95; III, 270 ff.; Cartwright, *Autobiography*, 157.
13. Posey, *Baptists*, 94, 96.
14. McDonnold, *Cumberland Presbyterian Church*, 411; Franceway R. Cossitt, *The Life and Times of Reverend Finis Ewing* (Louisville, 1853), 273; Posey, "Slavery Question in the Presbyterian Church," 319; General Assembly *Minutes* of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1848, pp. 12-13, 1851, pp. 56-57.
15. Posey, "Slavery Question in Presbyterian Church," 314, 319.
16. Edd Winfield Parks, "Dreamer's Vision: Frances Wright at Nashoba, 1825-1830," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series No. 2, II (January, 1932), 75 ff.; O. B. Emerson, "Frances Wright and Her Nashoba Experiment," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VI (December, 1947), 291-92, 295; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 461.
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19. *Ibid.*, 312.
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- note; Joseph C. Carroll, *Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865* (Boston, 1938), 171-77; Niles' *Weekly Register*, XLI, 340-41; Herbert Aptheker, *Negro Slave Revolts in the United States, 1526-1860* (New York, 1939), 51.
22. *Public Acts*, 1831, Chap. CIII, 122-24, Chap. CII, 121-22.
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 26. *Nashville Gazette*, July 5, 1834, quoted in White (ed.), *Messages*, II, 605.
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 40. Herndon, "Nashville Convention," 215; Parks, *John Bell*, 250; *Republican Banner*,

- February 28, 1850; newspaper quotation in Campbell, "Tennessee and Union" (dissertation), 66.
41. *Congressional Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., 244-47; Parks, "John Bell and the Compromise of 1850," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (August, 1943), 339, 340-41; *John Bell*, 243 ff.
 42. *Ibid.*; St. George L. Sioussat, "Tennessee, The Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, II (December, 1915), 326 (reprinted in *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, IV, December, 1918, pp. 215-47).
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 44. Quoted in *ibid.*, 258; Frederick W. Seward, *Reminiscences of a War-Time Statesman and Diplomat, 1830-1915* (New York, 1916), 80; Sioussat, "Tennessee," 342.
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 50. *Daily American*, June 16, 1850; *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, June 3-12, 1850, *passim*; *True Whig*, quoted in Herndon, "Nashville Convention," 226.
 51. *Memphis Daily Eagle*, November 18, 1850, quoted in Campbell, "Tennessee and the Union" (article), 80; Johnson, "Nashville Convention," 61.
 52. Sioussat, "Tennessee," 244; *Speech of Ex-Governor Aaron V. Brown, in the Second Session of the Southern Convention* (Nashville, 1850), 9-12; Herndon, "Nashville Convention," 230 ff.
 53. Newberry, "Nashville Convention," 273; Herndon, "Nashville Convention," 233; *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, November 12, 14, 1850; *Memphis Daily Eagle*, September 27, 1850, cited in Parks, *John Bell*, 262.
 54. *Nashville American*, August 13, 1851; Alexander, *Nelson*, 38; Parks, *John Bell*, 266; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 402 ff.; Campbell, "Tennessee and the Union" (dissertation), 85.
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 56. *Senate Journal*, 1851, p. 59; *House Journal*, 1851, p. 54; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 411-14.
 57. *Ibid.*, 420-21.
 58. *Ibid.*, 459-61; Alexander, *Nelson*, 41-45; "Thomas A. R. Nelson as an Example of Whig Conservatism in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XV (March, 1956), 21-22; Osborn, "James Chamberlain Jones," 324-25.
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